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# Sparks from A Superintendent's Anvil

A Practical Helper for every  
Sunday-School Worker

By A. F. SCHAUFFLER, D.D.

*Author of "Ways of Working," "The  
Teacher, the Child, and the Book," etc.*



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SPARKS FROM A SUPERINTENDENT'S ANVIL

## FOREWORD

THIS book is the result of thirty-six years of Sunday-school work, and of Bible study. There is in it nothing that has not been tested in actual life. The author is not ignorant of modern Paidology, in both its excellencies and its defects. The *matter* of teaching, and the *manner*, as well as the development of the child, have all been considered from the practical standpoint. The Bible studies are the outcome of much thought and experience, and have been tested in classes most intelligent, and not so intelligent, and have been found to stand the test of actual work done. That the volume will be most helpful to those who are on the "firing line" of Sunday-school work is the wish of its author.

A. F. SCHAUFFLER.





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# Sparks From A Superintendent's Anvil

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## BOOK I

### The Book or What We Teach

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#### CHAPTER I

##### SUGGESTED PRINCIPLES IN THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE

All will agree that the Bible is the most important book in the world. On it are based all our modern legislation and our civilization. It reveals to us more of the nature of God than any other book. It points out to us the way of salvation, and makes clear to us our duty toward God and man. It has more of light and comfort in its pages than all other books combined. Its uplifting influence is shown wherever men adopt its principles. If men were to obey the laws that it lays down, this world would be at once transformed, and be like heaven. For these reasons, thus briefly stated as well as for others, the Bible is the best book, and the most precious in the world.

Many Christians believing what has been said above have already tried to study this book so that they may know what it teaches. But they have started in a vague

way, not knowing just how to begin or how to continue in their work. As a result, their labor has not been as satisfactory as they had anticipated. Parts of the Word they have found to be dull, and other parts they have not been able fully to master. As a result, they have ceased any systematic study of the Word, and have contented themselves with merely studying those parts that are contained in the lessons that they had to teach from week to week. This is a pity.

It is my hope to aid such students, and to entice them to take up the study of the Word with a more intelligent aim. In the first place, it is well to note that not all parts of the Bible are of equal value. For example, Malachi is not as important a book for us as Matthew, nor is it as needful for us to know the book of Job as it is to know the Gospel of John. Not that Job is not magnificent reading, for it is. But that it does not contain as much practical truth as does the Gospel named. This being true, it remains for us to find out, if possible, what are the *most* important books of the Bible, and then to concentrate our attention on them. That having been done, we may then go on to study the remaining books at our leisure.

Since we believe that God's Spirit had much to do with the preparation of the Word, it will be our duty to see how he worked in the guidance of the men who gave us this book. One of the first things that will strike the careful reader is that in the Bible history there are some periods that are very slightly touched on, while others are narrated in great detail. Take, for example, the story as given in the book of Genesis. In the first eleven

chapters we have the whole history of the world, including creation, given *most briefly*. If we accept Ussher's chronology (which we know is wrong, but which is the best we have up to date), these eleven chapters cover a period of not less than *two thousand years*. On the other hand, all the balance of Genesis, or thirty-nine chapters, covers the history of four men, namely, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. This is quite remarkable and calls for some explanation. Why did the writer thus condense one part of the narrative and so expand the other? The reason for this we shall see presently.

Again, the first chapter of Exodus covers, at the lowest computation, two hundred and fifteen years. But the second chapter covers only eighty years. But (still more remarkable) the rest of Exodus and all of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy cover *only forty years*. This is a very wonderful discrepancy, and there must be some reason for it. To discover this reason will be our delightful task.

Passing on to the New Testament, we find that in Matthew, chaps. 1 and 2 cover thirty years of our Lord's life, while all the rest of that Gospel covers only three years and a half. The same is substantially true of the Gospel of Luke, while neither Mark nor John tell anything about those thirty years.

Once more. In the Gospels themselves we find more space given to the story of the last few days of our Lord's life than to any other equal portion. For example, Matthew gives us (in my Bible) nineteen pages on the whole of Christ's life up to the last week, and then eleven pages are given to the narrative of about one

week of his last days. Surely, there must be some good reason for this great difference in the amplitude of the narrative ! The same is true in the other Gospels. About one-third of their contents is given to the last few days of the Master's life.

Compare, if you will, the space devoted to the story of Israel during the Exodus and that devoted to the three years of the public life of our Lord. In the former we have one hundred and fifty-one pages. In the four Gospels, which, as we have seen, are almost wholly devoted to the story of three and a half years of Jesus' life, we have one hundred and twelve pages. If proportionally as much space had been given to the story of Israel in the desert as has been given to the life of our Lord, it would have been expanded to one thousand eight hundred and twelve pages. Why was the one narrative, then, so contracted, and the other so expanded ? There must be some good reason for this, and it is ours, as we have said, to discover this reason.

Look at this book now from another standpoint, namely, that of miracles. Some people wrongly think that the Bible is full of miracles from one end to the other. This is not so. There are many miracles in the Word, but they are mostly concentrated at *a few points*. For example, in the first eleven chapters of Genesis there are (outside of the creation story) few miracles. But when we come to the story of the Patriarchs, we find that the miraculous begins to multiply. God speaks more often to men in that period, and his revelations are more abundant. For this, there must be some good reason.

Again, in what we may call the Mosaic period, miracles

begin to multiply as never before. All through those forty years God intervenes constantly, and while he does not break any of nature's laws, he does undoubtedly bring in a higher law in order to prove his revelation to mankind. Here for about forty years we find God's hand very apparent, and that for good reasons, as we shall presently see.

When we come, however, to the period of the Christ, we find that the miraculous multiplies as never before. During the life of our Lord, and that of the apostles, we find at times many scores of miracles in a single day, and at times these are of a very marvelous sort. For this, too, there is a good reason.

From the above the writer draws the conclusion that where the narrative amplifies and at the same time the miracles multiply, there is to be found a period of *especial importance*. It seems to him that in this way the Divine Spirit tries to call the attention of mankind to the truths that are especially set forth in that period. Note that we insist that the two signs must *coincide*. The narrative must broaden out, and at the same time the miraculous must be marked. There are some portions of the Word where the narrative amplifies, while the miraculous does *not* multiply, as in the story of David. But these are not periods of the utmost importance.

Now let us see how this theory works out.—Take the period of the Patriarchs first. Was not this a period of peculiar importance? We think it was. For, at this time, God was founding that "Covenant People" through whom he was to transmit to future generations his truth. Here is to be found the beginning of that



race from whom came all the prophets and all the apostles, and even the Messiah himself. The hope of the world lay in that people, and on that account the story of how God called and cared for the Patriarchs is one of the utmost import to us. Not in all the world has there been found a race on whom so much depended. Nor Greece, nor Rome ever contributed so much to the uplifting of mankind as did this people, whose beginnings we here see set forth. No wonder, then, that the Spirit emphasized so much by narrative and miracle this crucial epoch.

But if this be true in the Patriarchal period it seems to us that it is still more true in the period of Moses. And why? Because in this period God, after welding the Jewish people together in the fires of affliction as never people was welded, was about to transplant them into the land promised to their great ancestor Abraham. And not only this. He was about to give them his laws, to act as their guide in all their national experience. He was here establishing as never before the worship of one only God. He was here laying the foundation for that national religion which was to contain more of truth than all other national religions put together. He was here giving them a higher legislation than this world had ever seen, and he was giving Israel that system of sacrifice and that tabernacle that was to be a type of him who was to come in God's due time. Here we find the types of the person and the character and mediatorial work of our blessed Lord. Is it any wonder, then, that God emphasized this period in a most marked way? Is it not just what we might naturally

expect? When we grasp the significance of the events recorded from Exodus 3 to the end of Deuteronomy, we no longer wonder at the length of the story or the number of divine interventions.

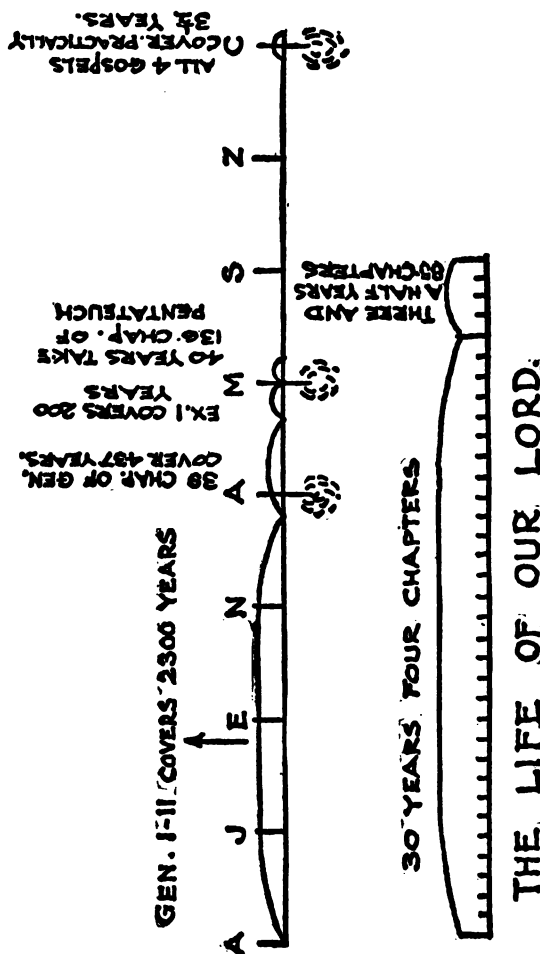
Pass on now to the Messianic period, namely, that of the life of our Lord and his apostles. Here the narrative expands into a fourfold story, (besides the Acts of the Apostles,) told by four different men. It amplifies very largely, most of it referring to only three and a half years. Here, too, we see the miraculous multiplying more than ever. Is there reason for this? Most assuredly. For this is the *most important* of all the epochs of human history. In this period we find all the Old Testament history culminating. Here is the fulfilment of prophecy and typology. The law was only a school-master to bring God's people down to Christ. God, who had spoken in times past by the prophets, now speaks by his Son, and well may we expect the story to be told in great detail, and be enforced by signs and wonders as never before. If (as all agree) Christ is the most important personage in the world's history, then it was fitting that his advent should be given in detail, and his coming be signalized by many miracles.

(And just here let us say that the most important period in history is *yet to come*, and when it does come, there will be a most marvelous outburst of the miraculous once more. Some men say that the age of miracles is past. We say that it is suspended, but that *when he comes again*, then will the miraculous reappear as never in all the story of this world.)

Now in view of what we have said regarding the prin-

ciple of Bible study, it is apparent that the portions of the Word that call for our special attention are those which the Spirit of God has most particularly emphasized. He who knows well the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Messianic periods of sacred history, has made a good start. Then he can go on to study other interesting portions, like that of the monarchy and divided kingdom, or the return from captivity. But if he tries to take all this in before he has mastered in some degree the more important epochs, he will be "putting the cart before the horse."

Study now the following diagram as illustrative of what we have been trying to make clear. It will help the matter materially. The line represents the time from Adam to Christ, or (according to Ussher's chronology) four thousand years. The upright lines represent each five hundred years of time. The letters of the alphabet are those of the leading men of the time in which they appear. They are as follows, starting from the left. Adam, Jared, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Christ. The dots under some of the names signify that at that period the miraculous multiplied greatly. In these periods, too, the narrative amplifies. Note the setting forth to the eye of the manifest inequality of the space given to parts of the story that are not important to the mind of the Spirit, as we have tried to indicate in what we have said. If you will study the diagram until you are familiar with it, and, indeed, until you can make a similar diagram, you will be able to take in the meaning of what has been said above.



The second diagram sets forth the relative space given in the four Gospels to the thirty years of silence, and the three and a half years of activity in the life of our Lord, and is meant to emphasize what has already been said along that line. It would be helpful if the teacher would for himself draw out a similar diagram, setting forth the relative space given to the three and a half years, and the last three days of our Master's life. This would set forth the estimate of the importance of the Master's death and

resurrection, as entertained by the evangelists.

Now if we apply these principles to the lessons of the International Lesson Committee for the two terms, 1900-1905 and 1906-1911, we shall see that they have recognized this division of matter, and have laid much

emphasis on those periods that we have regarded as crucial. For example, in the years 1900 to 1905 inclusive, the Committee gave three years and a half to the Gospels and the Acts, besides giving eleven lessons to the Patriarchal period, and nineteen lessons to the Mosaic period. In this way they gave to the crucial periods 184 lessons out of a total of 264 lessons. (In this count, review lessons and temperance lessons, 48 in number for the six years, have been omitted.)

Taking the second course which we began to study in 1906, and continue through 1911, we find that there has been given to the crucial period the following emphasis. There have been assigned to the Gospels and the book of Acts, three and a half years or 184 lessons. To the Patriarchal and Mosaic periods, we have given 26 lessons.

This makes in all as given to the three important periods a total of 210 lessons out of a total of 264 lessons.

In this way the International Lessons have recognized what is of the highest importance in the Word. At the same time they have not passed by other parts of the Word, but have so dwelt on them as to give the gist of the sacred narrative in measurably proper proportion.

Now if the intelligent teacher has followed us thus far in our statement, he has seen that it is well worth his time to devote much energy to the study of those parts of the Word to which his attention has been called. If he does this, then he will have laid a grand foundation for the study of those other parts of the Word to which no especial allusion has been made, and in this way he will find that he is a teacher who is able "rightly to divide the Word of Truth" to those under his care.

## CHAPTER II

### BIBLE DRAMAS

In this chapter it will be my endeavor to aid the teacher in the right understanding of the general outline of biblical history that we should study. In the last chapter we gave some suggestions as to why the Bible passes certain periods of history by with such short notice and dwells at such great length on other parts. Might I suggest that the teacher read that over once more so as to have it freshly in mind, for it will help in the right understanding of what is to be said now.

Historians often speak of "The Drama of History" as though it were a play enacted before the eyes of men. If we may adopt this term and apply it to Bible history, then we might say that the Bible presents for our consideration *two mighty dramas*. One is that set forth in the Old Testament and the other that presented in the New Testament. Generally dramas are in five acts, so, for the sake of clearness, we divide these two biblical dramas into five acts. Let it be said right here that we have no "Thus saith the Lord" for this division, but present it for the consideration of teachers, as a help to clearness of thought in Bible study. Others might make a different, and, perhaps, a better division. But that certain great stages of truth are set forth in the Word admits of no successful contradiction.

## OLD TESTAMENT DRAMA

**First Act.**—Creation to Noah (Gen. 1-8). Here we have set forth, in contradistinction to all other religions, the Oneness of God. The first verse of Genesis has more of truth in it than all of the imaginations of polytheistic religions put together. "In the beginning God created." That excludes polytheism, materialism, pantheism, and all other false conceptions of the origin of this world and of man. When all was finished we read "And God saw that it was very good."

The end of this act, however, is marked by failure on the part of man. We read that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great and that the imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6: 5). So the end of the first act was the obliteration of mankind with the exception of one family.

**Second Act.**—Noah to Abraham (Gen. 7-12). Here we have, as it were, a second probation given to man. With the family of Noah, God begins once more; but this time, too, there is on the part of man failure. Man prospers and his civilization is very great, but with all this material advance he loses his knowledge of God and truth. Man says, "Go to, let us build," while God says, "Go to, let us confound" (Gen. 11: 4, 7). So the second act ends, so far as man is concerned, like the first, in failure.

This suggests the fallibility of man unless upheld by especial divine grace. We have no confidence in "human nature," unless it is supplemented by divine grace. Man is capable of all things exalted, if God dwell in him. But left to itself human nature *tends downward*, ever and always.

**Third Act.**—From Abraham to Kings. In this act we see God calling out from heathendom a peculiar people, with whom, through Abraham, he makes an especial covenant. To that people God reveals truth as he does not to the world outside. That this statement is strictly true is evidenced by all history. For, though the Greek and the Roman worlds produced many wonderful philosophers and statesmen, many artists and orators, they produced no such men as Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Amos. More of divine truth has come to the world through these descendants of Abraham than through *all others put together*. For no man in his senses would say that even such philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, or Socrates had uttered as sublime truths as did the Hebrew prophets. To Moses alone, of all the Old Testament writers, the world owes more than to any other man before the Christian era.

In this act it is that God gave the grand legislation of Mount Sinai and the whole system of typology that found its fulfilment in the person of the Messiah. This, then, is a most significant act, and to it the world owes more than it ever can rightly understand. Wipe out what we have received through the revelation to Abraham and to his seed up to the times of the kings (to say nothing of later times), and you have an awful abyss of darkness left.

**Fourth Act.**—From Kings to the Captivity. Mingled success and failure. After the division of the kingdom into two we find in the northern kingdom (Israel) only idolatry. Jeroboam started this evil career by the worship of the golden calves, and (excepting under Jehu) the northern kingdom was given over to idolatry of increas-



ing vileness. It will pay the teacher to draw out of the record the names of all the kings of the northern kingdom, and write opposite to them the chief characteristics of their reign. It is a dismal record. In the end it was the cause of the captivity of Israel, which came much sooner than the captivity of Judah.

In the southern kingdom (Judah) we have mingled godliness and idolatry. Some of the kings, like Hezekiah, Josiah, Joash, were good. Others, like Ahaz and Manasseh, were vile. On the whole, things went from bad to worse in that kingdom, as well as in the northern kingdom. True there were periods of reformation, and there were many prophets who did much to restrain the evil tendency of the people. There was always a "remnant" that held to the true religion. But in the end disaster came to Judah on account of her sins, and she, too, marched off to captivity.

Fifth Act.—Captivity and Return. The story of the return of Judah from captivity is told in Ezra and Nehemiah. It is a most fascinating narrative. That which marks it, however, as *most peculiar* is that from the time of the return, even to the present day, the Jew has not again fallen into the sin which was his prevailing sin, namely, that of idolatry. Strangely enough, in an idolatrous land they learned more of the worship of the true God than they, as a people, seemed to be able to learn in their own land. So far as the writer knows, from that day until this, though scattered through all the world, the Jew has never practiced idolatry in any form. Whatever his faults, in this he has been faultless. God cured his people of their most besetting sin.

HERE FOLLOWS AN INTERREGNUM OF 400  
YEARS. FROM MALACHI TO MATTHEW

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NEW TESTAMENT DRAMA

**First Act.**—John the Baptist to Jesus. Preparation. For four hundred years there had been no prophet among the covenant people. Then came John the Baptist. He preached in the wilderness, and to him vast throngs went out. His message might be summed up in two words: *Repent, Prepare*. At last the long looked-for Messiah was about to appear, and the types given under the Old Dispensation were to be fulfilled. It was necessary that the nation should be aroused so as to receive rightly their great Messiah. This was John's message, and right well did he deliver it. For six months he preached with great power. John baptized many, they confessing their sins. So great was his influence that many mused in their hearts whether he was not the Messiah himself. To all such John replied that he was not the Messiah, but only a Voice proclaiming the coming of One, the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose. Thus ended the first act.

**Second Act.**—The Years of Christ's Public Ministry. This began with his baptism and ended with his ascension. This was the most important act thus far in all the drama of Old or of New Testament history. For in this act, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by

his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2). Through the teaching, the suffering, and the personal character of the Lord Jesus Christ we have received more of divine truth than through all the Old Testament prophets put together. For the law came by Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Here it is that we have the greatest of all mysteries, "God manifest in the flesh." In the person of our blessed Lord we have the completion of all the types of the Old Testament. He it is who is forever our high priest, so that we no longer need any human priests to intercede for us. He it is who is our Lamb, so that we can say, Now is Christ our Passover sacrificed for us. Through his sacrifice we have atonement and the remission of our sins. If we lost all of the Old Testament, we should lose much. But if we retained the story of the life and death of Jesus, we should still have the best of the divine revelation left to us. Language fails to express adequately what truth has come to mankind through the events of this second act in the drama of the New Testament.

**Third Act.**—From Pentecost to the Turning to the Gentiles. In the Old Testament we have the foundation of the Jewish church. Through this people we have had preserved to the world true monotheism. In the New Testament we have the foundation of the Christian church. This took place on the ever memorable day of Pentecost. Then was founded that church which under various names and forms still abides and will abide to the end of the age. Endued with power, twelve simple men, without wealth, position, or education, laid the foundation of that church which has been

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of boundless blessing to the world, and which to-day, in spite of all its shortcomings, is the best thing that this poor world has. At first this church was made up of believing Jews. But soon the "middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile was broken down, and Peter received at Cæsarea Gentiles into the fold. Thus the world-wide nature of the church of Christ was established, and there was no longer "any difference," and Jew and Gentile were united in one fold. But alas! the Jewish world, as a whole, was not willing to receive the new truth, and rejected God's messengers so that they "turned to the Gentiles." Paul says to the Jews, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46). More and more from that time on the Gospel has been accepted by the Gentile world, and but few Jews have been willing to accept Jesus as their Messiah.

**Fourth Act.**—The Times of the Gentiles. *In this act we now are.* Though we do not understand the ways of God, which are past finding out, excepting as he reveals them to us, we can see certain great outlines of his dealing with men. Among these is this, that to the Gentiles now the truth has come. The days of the covenant people have passed for a season, and the times of the Gentiles have been ushered in. As the Apostle Paul says, "Blindness in part hath happened to Israel." Over the eyes of Israel a veil has fallen, so that they do not see that the Messiah has come, and that the promises to their fathers have been fulfilled.

We must not conclude, however, on this account, that God has cast away his people. He has not. Though Jesus has been to them a "stumbling-block," yet the time is coming, when the fulness of the Gentile world has been gathered in, that the veil shall be lifted, and all Israel shall see and shall accept the Nazarene as their Lord and Master. In the meantime Jerusalem must be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, until the "times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," as our Master said. (See Luke 21:24.) One of the wonders of history is to be found in the story of the covenant people, since the days of their rejection of their own Messiah. They cried, "We have no king but Cæsar," and from that day to this they have had earthly tyrants enough. Roman emperors, Greek kings, Czars, Sultans, all have ruled over God's ancient people. They have been scattered over the whole earth. And yet they have preserved their national faith pure, as no other nation on earth has ever done under similar circumstances.

How long are the "times of the Gentiles" to last? We do not know, and all attempts to fix dates are futile. But they will not last forever. The time is coming when the "times of the Gentiles" will come to an end. Then Act IV of the great New Testament drama will close.

If the teacher wants to find Scripture confirmation of what we have said about the "veil over the eyes of Israel," let him read carefully Romans 9, 10, and 11. There he will find much food for thought as to God's dealings with Israel in these later centuries. Of course he will find there much that seems hard to understand.

But that God is dealing with them in his wisdom there can be no manner of doubt.

**Fifth Act.**—The Ingathering of Israel. This act is yet in the future. When the "time of the Gentiles" comes to an end, then the veil that has darkened Israel's vision for these centuries will be lifted. As Paul says in his second letter to the Corinthians, chap. 3:16, the veil shall be taken away, and Paul adds that if the blindness of Israel has brought blessing to the Gentile world, what shall their restoration be but as life from the dead to the Gentile world itself. God has not cast off his people, but reserves for them blessings in the future, when they shall be willing to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, who is of their own flesh, as their Redeemer and Lord. Then to the Jewish world, and to the Gentiles as well, there will come a greater blessing than this world has ever seen.

If now the reader will pause to consider the ground that we have been over in these dramas of the Old and the New Testament, he will see their great significance. He will understand more of the divine plan of dealing with men in the past and of God's action toward them in the future than he can learn from all other books put together. The fulfilment of past prophecies will assure him that those that lie yet in the future are sure to be fulfilled. He will understand the significance of the Old Testament history as perhaps he has never done before. It will show him how the Old Testament *enfolds* the New, and the New *unfolds* the Old. History becomes more comprehensible than it ever was before, and we understand many of God's purposes in his dealings

with the sons of men. We see now why certain parts of the history which deal with important periods in God's purpose are amplified and given in great detail, while those parts that are not of such grave import are passed over in comparative silence. We see why the story of the coming of the Messiah is told more fully than that of any other portion of history, because in this life we have the fulfilment of what had passed, and the promise of what is still to come.

We see also this great truth that in the dispensation of God the GOLDEN AGE is not in the past, but *in the future*. Heathen nations are apt to point to their past history as containing their golden age. They mourn over its departure, and cherish no hope of its return. To the believer in the Word of Promise, the golden age of God's people is yet to come, and God has reserved *the best to the last*. The world to-day is better than it was yesterday, and to-morrow it will be better still. This world is not always to groan and travail in pain as it has done these millenniums, but is one day to be delivered from its burdens, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, for he is yet to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

Finally, as co-workers with God, we can do better and more intelligent work as we better understand his plans, so far as they are revealed. We need not work in the dark, but in the light. We need not pray for the coming of his kingdom (as we do in the Lord's prayer) without feeling confident that we are in the line of his own blessed purpose. Now we may feel sure, as perhaps we never did before, that "all things

work together for good to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). So we toil on, knowing that our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord, and that in his own good time and way the triumph is secure.



## CHAPTER III

### THREE LANDS OF THE BOOK

My theme is three lands of the book, namely, the land of Egypt, the land of the Wilderness, and the land of Promise. For the sake of clearness we divide them as follows: the land *from which* Israel came, the land *through which* Israel came, and the land *to which* Israel came.

No teacher who is ignorant of the general aspect of these lands can do the best work with the class. Ignorance is not a good tool for the teacher to use. Yet there are many teachers who do not know anything at all about the general characteristics of these Bible countries.

Take, then, first, the land from which Israel came. This is the land of Goshen, in Egypt. This lay in the northeastern part of Egypt, and was a rich land. It had no mountains, but was level, and in all parts well watered by the river Nile. No frost ever destroyed the crops in that land, and no violent rains injured the fields. It was most fertile and was counted the best part of Egypt. Had it not been for the bitter bondage which Israel had to endure, it would have been an ideal land for them to live in forever.

When Israel came out of Egypt they soon passed into a land of an entirely different kind. The peninsula of Sinai is most stern and rugged. The northern part of this peninsula is a high tableland of limestone, about

two thousand feet above the level of the sea. This they called "the great and terrible wilderness," on account of its unfruitfulness and its lack of good water. South of this desert there stand the grand mountains of the Sinai group. In the midst of this group Israel lay encamped for about one year. The plain on which they pitched their tents was the plain of Er Rahab, and was about five thousand feet above the level of the sea, while the mountain on which Moses received the law towers about the plain for two thousand feet. This mountain rises so abruptly from the plain that one may walk up to it and lay one's hand on it, much as one does with a perpendicular wall.

North-north-east of this region of Sinai lies the Negeb, or land of the forty years of wandering. It is a mountainous land, and so desert that the people had to be fed with manna lest they perish. Of course, it was their own fault that they did not go at once into the land of promise, and had they not rebelled against God, they would have been in Canaan within two years after leaving Egypt. In this land the only inhabitants were the roving Amalekites. They were bitter enemies of Israel, attacking them in the rear, and cutting off such stragglers as they could entrap. They fought one pitched battle with Israel at Rephidim before ever Israel reached Mt. Sinai.

So much for the two lands, from one of which Israel departed, and through the other of which Israel passed. This brings us to the land to which Israel was journeying. What kind of a land, then, was this, geographically? It was in many respects a remarkable land. In

the first place, it was not a large land. In its widest extent it was only about as large as Massachusetts and Connecticut together. This reminds us that a land is not dependent on its size for the influence that it exerts. Greece was a very small land, yet its influence on humanity has been very much larger than that of Persia, which was vastly larger. Scotland is a small land, yet it has had a very large influence on modern civilization and thought.

Palestine may be divided into four distinct regions.—On the west we find, running from end to end of the land (interrupted only by the promontory of Mt. Carmel), a low plain, bordering the Mediterranean Sea. This was called the maritime plain. Its soil was rich and its crops abundant. Two portions of this plain were especially remarkable; the one being the plain of Sharon, southeast of Joppa, and the other the great plain of Esdraelon, southeast of Mt. Carmel. On this latter plain it has been said that more battles have been fought than on any other one spot in the world.

East of this maritime plain we found a low range of foothills, which are called the "Shephelah." This was composed of grassy hills about three hundred feet high, on which shepherds found abundant pasture for their flocks. Then came what we might call the "backbone" of the land, in the shape of a mountain range, running through the whole land, from north to south, averaging about twenty-five hundred feet in height. Nestled in among these mountains lay some of the most renowned of the cities of Israel, such as Nazareth, Samaria, Shechem, Shiloh, Bethel, Jerusalem, and Hebron. At

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the extreme north of the land this range terminated in the lofty peaks of Lebanon, while in the extreme south it fell away in the deserts of the Negeb, or south land.

Due east of this "backbone" of the land lay the Jordan valley. In America we should call this valley a canyon, for it has been cut by the Jordan itself, which word "Jordan" means *the Descender*. At its northern portion this valley is above the level of the Mediterranean, at least seventeen hundred feet. But its descent is so swift that as it enters the Dead Sea it is thirteen hundred feet below the Mediterranean, having descended four thousand feet. Its whole length is only one hundred and thirty-four miles, but owing to its many windings, it is really two hundred miles long.

Once more, east of the river Jordan lies the eastern tableland. This consists of mountains that rise quite abruptly from the gorge of the Jordan, and then slowly fall away to the great Arabian desert on the east of the Holy Land. This is a most fertile land, and in ancient days was a kind of granary for the whole of Palestine. In modern days it had been given over to the roving tribes of the desert, and is unsafe for travelers to the east.

From what has been said above it may be realized that the land had many different kinds of soil, climate, and characteristics. The valley of the Jordan was tropical in its climate, and at Jericho and at other places the palm tree flourished. But in the mountain ranges snow fell each year, while in the loftier ranges of the north snow lay for a large part of the year. In this remarkably small and yet equally remarkably influential land the patriarchs lived, and here the prophets spoke. Here

it was that our blessed Lord lived for the whole of his life, and here it was that the beginnings of the Christian church may be found. From it came the Book of books that we call our Bible, and in it at one time alone was the true God worshiped. These are among the reasons why it is truly called a remarkable land.

If, now, we look at the seas of this land, we shall find them three in number. In the north there lies the sea of Merom. This is a small body of water, only three miles across. There are no very noteworthy incidents connected with it. South of this lies the Sea of Galilee, a fine body of water about fourteen miles long and nine miles wide. It is embosomed among the beautiful hills of Galilee, and is remarkable for the many miracles that the Master wrought in the towns on its shores. As it lies in the line of the canyon of the Jordan, it is exposed to sudden and violent storms, such as those which nearly wrecked the fishing-smacks of the disciples. In our Saviour's time it was surrounded with many and populous cities, and had on its bosom hundreds of fishing-boats. At present there is only one town there, Tiberias, and that is not mentioned in the sacred narrative at all.

Further south we find the Dead Sea, about forty-six miles long and thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean. It has no outlet, the evaporation in that hot basin being sufficient to dispose of all the water that the Jordan pours into it. Its waters are so impregnated with solid matter that it is impossible to sink in it, and, of course, they are unfit for drinking purposes. It never had any large cities on its banks, Jericho being the one nearest to it. In patriarchal days,

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Sodom and Gomorrah lay (probably) on the north end of it, but all traces of them have long since disappeared.

Finally, in this brief review of the characteristics of the land, we come to its chief mountains. Beginning at the north we have Mt. Hermon, nine thousand feet high. It is now thought that it was on one of the spurs of this mountain that the transfiguration took place. West of the Sea of Galilee we have the "Horns of Hattin," which is supposed to be the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount. At the northeastern corner of the great plain of Esdraelon lies Mt. Tabor, where Deborah and Barak fought, which rises to the height of two thousand feet. A little further south we find Mt. Gilboa, where Saul and his son Jonathan fell in the battle with the Philistines.

Mt. Carmel, noted for the sacrifice of Elijah, and as the subsequent dwelling-place of Elisha, rises from the plain of Esdraelon, and juts out into the Mediterranean Sea. To the east of Jerusalem, and, indeed, overlooking that city is the Mount of Olives, made eternally sacred through its associations with the Lord himself. From its summit you can look far south and see Mt. Nebo, where Israel's great leader, Moses, died, and where his burial-place still is, though no man knoweth its exact locality to this day.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LAST WEEK BEFORE THE RESURRECTION

**METHODS** of teaching are important. But it is also of the greatest importance to know *what* to teach. Now of all our blessed Master's life, no part is of more importance than this last week, from the Friday before his crucifixion to the day of his burial. The evangelists give more space to this than to any other part of his life; and this is most significant.

In order to simplify the story and bring out its salient points most clearly, we shall divide what we have to say under the following heads: 1. Christ's friends. 2. Christ's foes. 3. Christ's triumph. 4. The temporary triumph of his foes. 5. The despair of his disciples. All of these are compacted into the bitter experiences of that one week. They mark the culmination of a life such as never before blessed this world, and are well worth our most careful and prayerful attention.

1. Christ's friends.—Of these there were many. In the first place, we have his apostles. Then there were many others who believed on him, for there were thousands to whom he brought blessing both in body and soul. From all over the land they came to Jerusalem to attend the feast of the Passover. Many also came to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, and many came to see Christ, for they seem to have had the thought that he would at this time show himself as the

king of Israel for whom they had so long waited. Probably there were thousands of those whom he had healed, or to whose families he had ministered, and other thousands who had heard him preach, all of whom were enthusiastically devoted to him. It was from this multitude that the songs of praise arose, as he rode into the city of David on Palm Sunday. It was this same multitude, of whom his foes were so afraid that they declared that they could not arrest him on a feast day, "because they feared the people." Had Jesus chosen to proclaim himself David's successor, this is the throng that would have hailed him, and have crowned him their king.

2. Christ's foes.—These were not so numerous as his friends, but they were the leaders of the people. Scribes, Pharisees, chief priests, were all in this catalogue. At first, when Jesus began to teach, they had watched him to see whether they could use him for their own political purposes. If he had made himself one with them in their ambitious schemes, they would, doubtless, have hailed his advent with delight. Their aims were all earthly. They wanted to expel the Romans, and set up a purely Jewish government, with their own members as leaders. Any one who could succeed in doing this would have been hailed by them with joy. But as time went on, and they saw that Jesus had no such aim as this, they began to antagonize him.

Then, too, he did not observe many minor ceremonies to which they attached undue importance, such as the ceremonial washing of hands, of pot and cups, etc. For this they condemned him, not realizing that the inner spirit of true religion was of vastly more importance



than the observance of rites and ceremonies. He refused to keep the Sabbath day in the absurd manner in which they observed it, and this made them very angry. Then, again, he mingled with the common people, and did not refuse to receive publicans and sinners, and to eat with them. In this way they thought that he defiled himself, and, of course, they condemned him for this also.

In his teaching they heard him say, "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, . . . but I say unto you." This they thought was arrogant, and they took offense that one who was a carpenter, and whose family was obscure, should speak in this way. Had he come from a "good" family, they might have stood it; but to have a "common man" teach in this self-reliant way was too much for these ambitious men. All this anger and jealousy was increased by his popularity, for they saw that thousands on thousands followed him, and that he was every day gaining followers. The common people heard him gladly, and were full of his praises.

The anger of this set of men was further increased by his first cleansing of the temple. They had allowed all manner of things to go on in the temple court that were dishonest, and that ill became the house of God. It was their business to have remedied this, but on account of the gain that came to the priests they permitted it to go on. His action in driving out the money-changers and the sellers of doves was a condemnation of their course that they felt and did not soon forget.

Add to this his frequent rebukes of their conduct, and

remember that they were openly delivered, and that the men whom he rebuked considered themselves far above him, and you will see how their hatred grew more and more bitter as the years went on. Long before this last week in his life they had made up their minds that he must die. He was in their way, and as they could not stop his teaching, and could not deny his great miraculous power, they felt that the only way to get rid of his presence was to do away with him altogether.

Now just as Christ's friends had rallied in great numbers at this feast of the Passover, so his foes had rallied also. Their one theme of conversation before that feast was as to whether Jesus would come to it or not. There is little doubt that they hoped that he would not come, for they feared the enthusiasm of the people, and dreaded the outcome of any popular demonstration. So when he did come, they watched his every movement with the utmost anxiety, lest he should take advantage of the throngs present, and achieve some notable success. As a result of conference with one another, they had agreed that they would not do anything to anger the people, lest they themselves should lose ground in their opposition to this teacher. True, they had already decided that they might take him by subilty and kill him, but they also said: "Not on a feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people" (Matt. 26: 3-5). This then was the critical situation of affairs when Jesus came to Bethany on Friday evening before the Passover. Now we will trace the current of events that culminated in his death and burial.

3. Christ's triumph.—Friday evening Jesus arrived at

Bethany. The next day was the Sabbath. That evening he dined at the house of Simon the leper, and there he was anointed by Mary, while Judas murmured. On the next day he rode in triumph into the city. All his friends were there and united in praising him as the Son of David. Of course, all this made much talk in that city, for every one there knew of what had happened, and was discussing it. The result was that the Pharisees saw that their party was losing ground, and they said among themselves, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing. *Behold the world is gone after him.*"

On Monday Jesus again went into Jerusalem.—Here for the second time he purified the temple, and healed the lame and the blind. The children, who were there, broke out in praise of him as the Son of David. He at this time reproved the priests and scribes, who, he knew, wanted to destroy him, and were restrained only because they feared the people. That evening he again went to Bethany, where he spent each night from Friday till the next Wednesday.

On Tuesday he once more went to Jerusalem.—By this time the hostile party had taken counsel together. They had made up their minds that as they did not dare attack Jesus openly, they would try and undermine his authority with the people by covert assault. They chose out their shrewdest men, and met him in the temple court, in the presence of a vast throng of people. Then they presented to him such questions as they thought would perplex him, and lead him to give a wrong reply. In that case, they planned to turn to the people at once and say, "See! this man whom you praise is wrong in his teach-

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ings, and, therefore, you are unwise in your admiration of him." Their efforts, however, failed utterly. He came out ahead in that conflict, and triumphed over his adversaries. Then it was that he turned to the multitude, and began that terrible arraignment of the Scribes and Pharisees, which we find in Matt. 23 : 2-39, commencing, "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat : All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, *but do not ye after their works : for they say, and do not.*" Be sure to read all that he said, and, in doing so, remember that he was denouncing the rulers of the nation, and was doing it in the presence of thousands of people. In this way you will realize better how they must have smarted under these scathing words, and have hated the one who uttered them.

That evening, after he had gone out to Bethany, his foes held a secret council, and, stung by his denunciation of them, agreed to give Judas thirty pieces of silver if he would betray Jesus to them, at some time and place where the multitude would be absent. The way in which Judas came to betray his Master was (as I conceive it) as follows : He was the treasurer of the twelve. His duty was to receive and expend the contributions that friends gave for the support of the disciples. He yielded to the spirit of covetousness, and stole part of that which he received. This evil spirit grew on him. At the feast in Simon's house on that last Saturday evening, he was angry because Mary spent so much in anointing the Master's feet. He wanted Mary to give him that precious ointment. He would then have sold it, and have retained part of the proceeds. When the

Master rebuked his covetous spirit, Judas was angry. He knew that the enemies of Jesus were ready to pay any one who was able to betray him into their hands. So he thought, "If I cannot get money in one way, I can in another." Led by his wicked desires, he went off at once to the chief priests, and said, "How much will you give me if I betray Jesus into your hands?" He then accepted their offer, and from that moment he laid his plans to carry out his bargain.

The next day was Wednesday.—All that day Jesus seems to have remained quietly in Bethany, resting before the breaking of the storm that was now so near at hand. What he did or said on that day we are not told.

On Thursday, too, the Master remained in Bethany, until the afternoon. Then he sent two of his disciples into the city to prepare for the celebration of the Passover, and later in the afternoon he followed them with the rest of the disciples. There, in the upper chamber, they partook of the Passover. Then Jesus went on, and instituted the Lord's Supper, before which, however, Judas went out to carry out his bargain with the chief priests. While the Lord was speaking the words that are found in John 13-17, Judas was busy with his arrangements for the betrayal. Then Jesus went forth to the garden of Gethsemane, and there he passed through that agony in the garden, which drew the bloody sweat from his brow. It was now late, and pious believers were all through with their Passover celebrations, and had gone to rest. The city was quiet, and all of Jesus' friends were wrapped in slumber. It was a good time for his enemies to be astir.

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4. The temporary triumph of his foes.—They had not intended to bring their opposition to a head at this time, for Christ had too many of his friends present, and they were afraid of a tumult. But when his attacks on them in the temple court angered them, and at the same time Judas came with his offer of *secret* betrayal, they thought that they saw the way clear to push their hatred of him to its legitimate end. So they took prompt action, and after midnight arrested him. Having taken this step, it was of the highest importance that the trial should be pushed through with the *utmost swiftness*, before his friends should be awake the next morning. Only this dire necessity will account for the way in which his foes acted.

The trial was a manifold one.—It was both ecclesiastical and civil. For, in the first place, the Jews wanted him tried by their own authorities, so that they could condemn him as a *blasphemer*. But, in the second place, they wanted him put to death; but as they had not the power of life and death, which the Roman government held in its own hands, they had to go before the Roman governor and have him condemn Jesus to death on the charge of *treason* against the government. This will explain why they first went before the Sanhedrim. Here the charges were entirely religious. They included the charges of Sabbath breaking, and of blasphemy in speaking against their temple, and of making himself equal with God. With all haste the great council was called together, so that they might get through their work and pass the matter over to Pilate before the people should be awake and, perhaps, attempt a rescue. In spite of the fact that their witnesses did not agree, they all voted that

he was guilty of blasphemy, and condemned him to death. Then they, with one accord, rushed over to the judgment hall of Pilate, and there again began to accuse him.

**The Roman trial.**—Before Pilate they utterly abandoned their religious charges, and brought forth *political charges*, such as that Jesus forbade men to pay their taxes, and that he set himself up to be a king, thus being guilty of treason. Of course, all this was false; but anything that would serve to have him condemned was used, without regard to its truth. Pilate soon found out that there was nothing in their charges, and that Jesus was innocent. Again and again he affirmed his conviction that there was no fault to be found with the prisoner. In his effort to escape condemning Jesus he sent him to Herod, who was in the city at that time. But neither did Herod find in him anything blameworthy. So he sent him back to Pilate.

Through all this farce of a trial the chief priests had men of their own choosing, "sons of Belial," to back them up by their wild outcries against Jesus. Whenever they saw Pilate waver for a moment, they filled the air with their cries of "Crucify, crucify!" Still Pilate refused, until at last the ecclesiastics used one argument as their last and most effective, saying that unless Pilate condemned the prisoner he was not loyal to Cæsar. Pilate understood by this what they meant; namely, that they would complain of him at Rome. Of this he was afraid, for his standing there at this time was none too good. So he gave sentence that it should be as they required.

Now bear in mind again the haste with which all this was done. The trial before the Sanhedrim and the two before Pilate and Herod, the condemnation and the crucifixion itself, were all pushed through before nine o'clock in the morning. This was lest the people (who had been up late the night before celebrating the Passover, and who, therefore, were late in rising) should rally to his rescue. In this they showed their diabolic shrewdness, and in it, too, they were successful. For by nine in the morning it was all finished, and Jesus was hanging to the cross, guarded by Roman soldiers, and an attempt at rescue would have been useless. Then with truly devilish joy, these chief priests and scribes and elders mocked him, saying, "If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." How false this was is apparent from the fact that three days later he arose from the dead, and instead of believing him they lied about the whole matter, and still refused to believe. So for a while his foes triumphed over him, and were filled with joy at their success.

5. The despair of his disciples.—This was absolute. For three years all their hopes had centered on this prophet. They had seen his wonderful works, and heard his wonderful words, and they hoped that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. Of course, they knew all about his birth and the angelic chorus on Bethlehem's plain. They knew about his baptism, and the voice from heaven, and the descent of the Spirit. And they fully accepted him as the Messiah. So they believed that he would triumph over all his foes, and sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem. When he spoke



to them of his rejection and humiliation, they would not listen, and, indeed, once Peter rebuked him for talking in that way. Of his prediction that he would be crucified they took no notice, for they thought that the Son of Man never could die such a death. To the very last they expected a triumph and not a defeat, least of all, *such* a defeat. So when they saw him on the cross, and heard his last cry, and saw that he was dead, *all their hopes perished*. They felt that in some cruel way they had been deceived, and that he was not what they had thought him to be. That he would rise again from the dead never once crossed their minds, so they simply laid his body away in the tomb, and went away in despair. A gloomier company than that which met in Jerusalem on Saturday and Sunday morning the world has never seen. How they must have discussed it all, and wondered what it all meant. But in all their discussion, never once was it suggested that they should ever see him alive again, or we may be sure that they would have themselves set a watch at that tomb. But not only did they not think it worth their while to do this, but they never went near the sepulcher in any way ; and when, on Sunday morning, the women went to the grave to embalm the body, the apostles did not go with them. What was the use? He was dead, they were deceived, and the hopes that they had cherished for three years were vain.

## CHAPTER V

### THE TEACHER'S LIBRARY

I FIND in a somewhat extensive experience with teachers, that most of them are satisfied if they have a "lesson help," giving comments and practical applications of the lesson for each Sunday. Few of them seem to realize that they need more than this, to enable them to do their *best* work. True, a teacher can do fair work, if she studies only the lesson help that she has. But no teacher can do as good work as she should do, unless she has more than just the weekly exposition of the lesson. In these days there are so many books that are an aid in the understanding, not only of the Bible, but of the scholar whom we teach, that we ought to avail ourselves of some of these books, in order to do our work just as well as it is possible for us to do it.

For, bear in mind, that your work is of the very highest importance.—You are teaching not with a view of giving your scholar information only. You are aiming at a higher end than that. If you have the right thought in mind, you are aiming at the developing of the character of the Master himself in the life of your scholar. Can there be any higher aim than this? If an angel were asked, "What is the best thing that could be done for the sons of men?" I think he would reply, "Make them to be like him who was perfect in word and deed."

But if this be your aim, then ought you not to try to reach that aim by every means in your power? Surely a little expense and a little labor ought not to be grudged, in order to help you to reach this ideal standard. If you will read what follows, you will see that it is not a great thing that I am suggesting to you. There are many teachers who, if they spent as much time and money on preparing themselves to teach as they spend on novels, would be much more successful than they now are.

Of course I do not mean in the least to decry the spiritual preparation which every teacher should make. We must first try hard to BE that which we want our scholars to be, or all our effort is vain. But if we do all that, it still remains true that we can do better work, and reap a larger harvest, if we try our very best to be fit for the office of teacher. Mere godliness is not enough to make a good teacher, and there be many godly teachers who fail, simply because they are not willing to make the effort and pay the amount needed to be better.

Now in the first place let me ask you this question. "Have you gone through any of the Normal Courses that are prepared for teachers by so many of our State Sunday-school Associations?" If you have not, then I would recommend you to begin in that way. Write to your State Secretary, and ask for the needful information along this line. Each of the well-organized States has such a course. In order that I may be as helpful to you as I can, let me say that the State of New York has such a course. It covers two years. You can go through

that course even if there be no Normal class in your School. The required work in that course is as follows:

*First Year :*

Outline Studies in the Old Testament. Price, \$ .25.

Sabbath School Methods, or a Primer  
on Teaching.

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*Second Year :*

Outline Studies in the New Testament.

“ “

From One to Twenty-one.

“ .10.


Surely that is not an appalling array of books or prices to start with. If you can pass an examination on these books then the State of New York issues you a Certificate, or Diploma, stating that you have passed the examination. Now if you want to know more about this two years' Normal Course, just sit down and write to Rev. G. L. Bice, 44 State Street, Albany, N. Y., and he will promptly let you know all that you need to know.

Of course I know that not a few who read this advice will say, "Yes, I really think that I will write to Mr. Bice." Then they will postpone doing so, until at last they forget all about it, or else their enthusiasm dies out and they do nothing about the matter. On that account my advice to you is this: "Do this immediately, if not sooner."

One reason why we do not secure better attention from our scholars is because they are thinking along one line, while we are trying to reach them along a totally different line. We have no point of contact with them.

You know how it is yourself, when you are deeply interested in something, and some one talks to you about some totally different matter. It is hard to listen attentively. If we were wiser, we should try hard to lead our scholars by the right way to that which we wish them to be interested in. Now if you will buy the book called, "Point of Contact," by Patterson Du Bois, (fifty-six cents), and study it carefully you will find yourself much helped in the right direction. It costs only fifty-six cents, and you can read it through in a couple of hours. Note, however, that I did not say, "Read it in a couple of hours," but "Study it carefully." The principles that are found in that book must be meditated over, and then patiently put in practice. If at first you fail in this, try once more, and KEEP ON TRYING until you attain some facility in doing what that book sets forth as the right thing.

I emphasize this point, because too many teachers think that they can gallop through such a book as they do with a novel, and then carry out all that it says. When they find that this is not possible, then they jump to the conclusion that the book was not good. This is all wrong. Only practice makes perfect, and you must study and practice much, before you can hope to become an expert. Do you suppose that the writer of that book leaped at a bound to the knowledge that he has? Surely not. He worked for it, and thought much over all that he says. Even so for you, there is no parlor-car route to expert work. You must work hard, or you will never attain. But attainment here is well worth the while, I can assure you.



Along an entirely different line, let me call your attention to another little book, "The Child for Christ," by A. H. McKinney, Ph. D., who was for years the Superintendent of the New York State Sunday-school Association. Dr. McKinney has had large experience in Sunday-school work, as well as in church work, and what he says in this little book is well worth the study of every teacher in the land. Note some of the chapters in this volume, and see if they are not important themes on which to dwell. "Child Conversion, What is it?" "Why Lead the Child to Christ," "Preparation for Leading the Child to Christ," "How to Bring the Child to Christ." At the close of the book (which costs only fifty cents), is a list of good books that the teacher may consult if she so desires. No one can read this book thoughtfully and not be better fitted to do work in her class.

All the books mentioned so far, bear on the work of the teacher in her individual class. They will be found most helpful. But the teacher, to be well instructed for her work all along the line, should go a little further afield in her reading and study. Take for example the little book by Dr. McKinney called "The Bible School," price fifty cents, and there you will find all manner of Sunday-school topics discussed by one who is truly an expert in these matters. Just read some of the titles of these interesting chapters, "The Model Bible School," "Abuse of Methods," "Aids in Teaching," "The Teacher Trained," and many others. Dr. McKinney was for thirteen years the superintendent of one of the most noted Sunday-schools in New York City. None better than he to guide workers to a high standard of attainment.

Another Sunday-school worker of international reputation is Marion Lawrance, now International Secretary, but for many years superintendent of a successful Sunday-school in Toledo, Ohio. He has published a most excellent book entitled, "How to Conduct a Sunday-school." In it you will find every topic that applies to the average Sunday-school discussed in a most intelligent and practical manner. Mr. Lawrance speaks out of a rich experience, which is more than some modern pedagogues do. See some of his topics. "That Big Boy, and How to Deal with Him," "The Sunday-school Enjoying Itself," "Temperance Day and How to Use it," "Methods of Securing and Holding Members." Are not these vital themes, and is it not worth your while to know what the best workers in the land have to say about them? (Price \$1.25.)

Amos R. Wells is another man of whom the Sunday-school world ought to be proud. He has written a book called "Sunday-school Success." In the preface he says: "In these pages I have described the methods of the most successful teachers and Sunday-schools I have known." That of itself should make the wide-awake teacher anxious to know what he has to say, for doubtless much is to be learned from such a writer. The price of this book is \$1.00. Another book by the same author is "Sunday-school Problems." Of the first chapter in this book Rev. R. W. Miller, D. D., says, "This chapter is worth more than the price of the book." (Price, \$1.00.)

If the teacher wants "The Old Testament Story," Vol. I, "The Patriarchal Age," Vol. II, "The Develop-

ment of the Nation," by Mary W. Brownson, it will be found to be a most valuable help in the teaching of the lesson for the year, for it is well told and most graphic. The price of these books is seventy-five cents each. In this general line let me mention still another book by that leader of thousands of teachers through his "Select Notes," Dr. F. N. Peloubet. It is called "The Front Line of the Sunday-school Movement." (Price, \$1.00.) It is brimful of suggestions as to what the best Sunday-schools are doing—and of what you may introduce into your school with great advantage if you have not already done so. Not one of these books but will widen the horizon of the one who reads them, and make of such a one a better worker. You need not purchase them all, but some of them you should own, and devour as you do a most delicious morsel of food.

And here may I make a suggestion?—I find many teachers all over the land who are annoyed because their superintendent is such a "Stick-in-the-mud." How would it do for you to purchase any one of these volumes and present it to him on his birthday, or at Christmas? Maybe it would arouse him to a larger conception of the work he has in hand. If you could add that you had been much profited by its perusal, it would help to recommend the book to him for careful study. At all events, it would do no harm.

Whenever we study any of the Gospels, we ought to have "The Interwoven Gospel" in our hands. This is the story of the four evangelists so put together that it forms one continuous story. The saving to the teacher who wants to have the complete story, both in time and



patience, is very great. I would not be without this book for a great deal. No book that I know of can take its place. It costs only seventy-five cents, and is worth its weight in gold to the intelligent teacher. On each page you will find the complete narrative of the four Gospels, and in addition to this you will find what each of the Gospels has to say. Do get this book, and see if what has been said of it is in any way an exaggeration.

And now finally.—Get a concordance. I cannot imagine how any teacher who wants to do the best work can get along without one. If you want to find any passage in the Word it is easily done by means of such a help. Cruden's Abridged Concordance is the best, and should not cost you more than \$1.00. I have found in my teaching that if I can fortify what I say by some passage from God's Word, it tells. This can be done by a right use of the concordance, as it can be done in no other way that I know of.

Should all these books seem to be out of your reach, on account of the price, is there any objection to your asking the "Powers that Be," to add them to your Sunday-school library? Of course it is better to own them (or some of them) yourself. But if this is not possible, the next best way is to have them within your reach in the library of your school. Altogether they will not cost \$10, and they will be a help, not only to you, but to any teacher in your school who wishes to read them.

**Note.**—If you want any of these books, write to the publishers of this book for them, and they will be sent at the prices named, plus the postage.

## CHAPTER VI

### ST. JOHN—A CITY OF TRUTH

Of all the Gospels that of St. John is the most difficult, and on that account calls for more study than do the others. There is less of narrative and more of spiritual teaching in it than in any of the other Gospels.

In all the work of the teacher, it is imperative that the teacher know *more* than just what is contained in the verses assigned for the lesson. On that account the teacher should aim to secure a somewhat comprehensive view of the whole book studied, before proceeding to the study of any particular portion.

We, therefore, venture to present this wonderful Gospel to our readers in the light of a *City of Truth*. Taking the Gospel as a whole, we may well regard it in this light, and give a little play to our imagination. Of course every city has streets, and each street has a name. In each street there is also some one house that is of more importance than the others. Supposing, then, that we call each chapter of this Gospel a street and give it a name. Supposing further we pick out in each street the most important number (verse) and tell why we regard it as so important. In this way we shall get an idea of the richness of the Gospel, and at the same time have a better idea as to the main contents of the Gospel than most people have.

The writer has tried this method in Bible classes that he has conducted and has found it to work well.

Each scholar has been asked to bring in a plan, worked on the basis mentioned above, naming streets and assigning numbers, according to their best judgment. The result has been most satisfactory. Were each of our readers to stop right here and before reading any further to do this, and then compare it with what follows, it would be a good exercise to go through with. Indeed, if we were only sure that our readers would do this, we might stop right here. But as most of them will not, we give our own arrangement of the streets and numbers in this City of Truth.

**Witness Street.**—Chapter 1. We give it this name, not because this is the only thing that is spoken of in the chapter, but because it is one of the important themes of which the Apostle John writes. In this chapter we have the story of the witness that John the Baptist gave to Jesus. Pick out the verses which set forth this witness, and you will see why this name is given to this street. But Andrew also bears witness, as does also Philip. If you ask for the most important number in this street we give No. 29 as that number, because in that the great character and work of our Lord is so clearly set forth.

**Wedding Street.**—Chapter 2. The reason for this name is apparent. In no other chapter in this Gospel is a wedding spoken of. This is the first miracle that our blessed Lord wrought, and it made a great impression on his disciples. In this street the most important number is No. 23, because many were led by the miracles of our Lord to believe in him.

**Eternal Life Street.**—Chapter 3. We so name this

street because in it is set forth, as perhaps in no other chapter in the whole Bible, the way of eternal life. Go through it carefully and you will find quite a number of verses which tell of the way of life. Of course in this street, by far the most important number is No. 16. This is the most wonderful sentence in the Bible, for it tells us of God's love for us, and of the way in which he showed that love in giving his Son for our salvation. If this were all that John had given us of the sayings of our Lord, we would never be able to repay him for it, for none of the other evangelists have given us this saying. Taking it all in all, this third of John is one of the richest chapters in all the New Testament.

**Well Street.**—Chapter 4. Stop right here and tell yourself as much of the story of this chapter as you can. Then look over the story as given by the evangelist, and see how much you have omitted. To this Samaritan woman Jesus revealed much of eternal truth, and the way in which he led her from antagonism to him to acceptance of him as the Messiah is most wonderful. To my mind the most important number in this street is No. 24, for here we find Jesus telling the woman who God is, and how we must worship him. Remember that at that time, in all the world, excepting among the Jews, men were worshipping idols of their own fashioning. Greece and Rome, to say nothing of Egypt and Asia in general, were all steeped in the grossest idolatry. In this verse Jesus sets aside all this idolatry and guides men to him who is the true God of us all.

**Bethesda Street.**—Chapter 5. This chapter is taken up with the healing of the sick man at the Pool of

Bethesda, and the consequent opposition of the Jews to the Master because he had wrought this miracle on the Sabbath day. They thought that healing was equal to working, and that on this account it was not lawful to heal on the Sabbath day. I find it hard to pick out the most important number in this street. Which one would you select? Look the chapter over carefully and decide. Perhaps the most important number is No. 39, for in it we have good advice, which, if we follow, we shall know more of the Word of God than we now know. Very possibly some might say that No. 24 is more important, and to this it would be hard to make valid objection. At all events, in this way we find that every chapter has more than one very important verse.

**Bread Street.**—Chapter 6. It is easy to tell why this name is selected, for in this chapter we have the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. This is the only miracle wrought by our Lord which is told by all four of the evangelists. This miracle made a deep impression on all who were present, and they wished to force Jesus to proclaim himself their king, for they thought that in that case he would feed them all for nothing. (See v. 15.) Our Lord wished no such outcome to his miracle, but he did wish to have them hunger for the Living Bread. All his effort, however, was vain, as may be seen from v. 66. In this street the most important number seems to me to be No. 35, for it tells of the way in which all spiritual hunger and thirst may be satisfied, and so far as the writer knows, this is the only way in which this can be done.

**Water Street.**—Chapter 7. Why do we adopt this

name? Because in the controversy with the unbelieving Jews, Jesus made the great proclamation that we find in v. 37. This verse is the most important number in the chapter, and is one that we may well memorize.

**Liberty Street.**—Chapter 8. In this chapter we are still in the midst of the bitter controversy between Jesus and the Jews. He tried to make them realize that they were the slaves of sin, and that not until they believed the truth as he taught it would they ever be free. They on the other hand boasted that they had never been in bondage. This was not true, for at that very moment they were in bondage to the Romans who ruled over them. What Jesus wished to make them see was that there is such a thing as spiritual slavery. This is true to this day, and the major part of the inhabitants of this world are still in just this kind of slavery. In this street the most important number is No. 36, for in it we find how we may be freed from the captivity by which Satan has bound us. The chapter is very rich in truth.

**Blind Man's Street.**—Chapter 9. It is easy to see why this name is chosen. The whole story of the man born blind is most fascinating. Read it carefully and see how the man was led into light of two kinds. Not only did he gain physical sight, but he gained spiritual sight as well. He was led step by step into the light of divine truth, and while the Pharisees remained in the darkness, he walked out into the light of a believer in Jesus, and ended by worshiping him. There are quite a number of important verses in this chapter. Which do you think is the most important? It seems to me that perhaps No. 38 is the most important, for it tells of the outcome

of the whole transaction, so far as the blind man himself is concerned.

**Shepherd Street.**—Chapter 10. Of course there will be no dispute as to the right naming of this street. Jesus knew well the relation of the shepherd to his flock. Their great king, David, had sung about the Lord being his shepherd, and they knew what he had said about the Lord's care for him, and for all who were in his fold. Their three great Patriarchs had been shepherds, as well as their great king. Let the teacher here read Jer. 50: 6, 7; Ezek. 34: 1-23 to get a good idea of the way in which God spoke of his people as his sheep, in the olden time. And in this street the most important number is No. 11, for here we find the Master's own saying as to his willingness to give his life for his own sheep. And here let me say that it would be most fitting for all who desire to do the best work at this kind of study, if they would treat these important numbers as Golden Texts and memorize them all.

**Lazarus Street.**—Chapter 11. In my classes, spoken of above, nearly all the members used this name for this street. But one suggested that it might be called Friendship Street. That was not at all a bad suggestion. In this chapter we have the shortest verse in the Bible, and one of the sweetest. "Jesus wept." It is said of Jesus only twice that he wept. The other instance is where he wept over Jerusalem. Has it ever occurred to you that we never once read "Jesus laughed"? Yet I cannot help thinking that he must have smiled when he took the little children in his arms, and it seems as though he must have smiled for joy often when he saw the bless-

ings that came to others through his healing power. In this chapter there are many important numbers. But it seems to me the most important is No. 25. How often has this utterance of our blessed Lord brought comfort to mourning ones by the side of the open grave! Read there, it sounds like a voice from heaven itself, as indeed it is.

**Hosanna Street.**—Chapter 12. This is the musical street of the whole Gospel. In the previous chapter we have sorrow and tears. In this we have popular rejoicing, and the shout of them that sang. The second chapter of Luke is another musical chapter, so also is Revelation 5 and Revelation 14. Alas! that not all in Jerusalem felt as did the multitude. There were some there who were angry because the people sang the praises of the Master. Had you been there, on which side would you have been? The number that is the most prominent on this street is 26, which sets forth the result of following the Lord Jesus as our master.

**Humility Street.**—Chapter 13. In naming this street my classes, to which I have referred, differed much. The following are the names that were given to it by various members of the class: Judas Street, Traitor Street, Preparation Street, Prophecy Street, Washing Street. What do you think the best name would be? It is easy to see why we have chosen the name that we have, because here we have the greatest example of humility that the world has ever seen. Read carefully the first verse, you will see that St. John emphasizes the fact that Jesus was at that very moment conscious that his origin was heavenly, and that he was soon to return to



his heavenly home, and that, in spite of this, he willingly became the servant of all, and took the menial place among the twelve. Here we have the sublime sight of the divine serving the human, and the sinless waiting on the sinful. The world had never seen such a manifestation before. Read in this connection Phil. 2: 5-11. Of course our choice of the important number will be No. 1.

**Peace Street.**—Chapter 14. We had almost called this Celestial Street, but on the whole settled down to Peace Street, on account of the 1st and the 23d verses. The peace that is spoken of in this chapter is all the more remarkable because our blessed Lord knew that on that same night he was to be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, and on the next day was to be “lifted up.” Yet, in spite of this fact, his mind was in peace, and he could comfort his disciples and breathe into their hearts the spirit of lasting peace. In this street we select No. 2 as the most important, since it is the verse that sets forth the everlasting mansions that the Master has prepared for all who love him.

**Vineyard Street.**—Chapter 15. That this is the right name, there can be no question. Here, taking the figure of the vine and its branches, the Lord sets forth his relation to all who believe in him. Here he sets forth the necessity of the believers abiding in him, if he is to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Note the impressive words, “without me ye can do nothing.” It is not, “ye can do little.” No, it is “nothing.” But if we abide in him and he in us, we bring forth much fruit, and in this way is God glorified. Of course in this case, as in that

of other chapters that we have named, other things are also spoken of. But that which is peculiar to this chapter is the vine and branch teaching. Let the teacher read, as bearing on this matter of the vine, Isa. 5: 1-7. If you want to be much profited go to No. 4 and take up your abode in that number for a while, and pray much that your residence there may be sanctified to you, and I am sure that you will not be disappointed.

**Spirit Street.**—Chapter 16. In this case, too, my classes chose several different titles, such as Comfort Street, Warning Street, Promise Street. Of course there is room for difference of opinion here. But we have named it Spirit Street because so much is said in it about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Look up vs. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, and you will see what we mean. In this chapter we are taught the truth that the Holy Spirit is not a mere "influence," impersonal, but that he is a person just as much as Jesus is a person. He has work to do for the believer and, as a matter of fact, we cannot possibly live the Christian life unless he abide in our hearts, and we can by no means understand the work of the Lord himself unless the Holy Spirit makes it clear to us. Young believers especially have much to learn about their dependence on the Holy Spirit for all that is important in their lives. Yet, alas! there are some to-day who call themselves Christians who might almost say with the men of Ephesus, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" (Acts 19: 2). On this account it is that so many are weak in their Christian lives. Take No. 13 as the important number in this street and you will not be far wrong.

**Prayer Street.**—Chapter 17. This contains the wonderful prayer of our Lord, which is sometimes called his “Mediatorial Prayer.” It is so called because in it we find him praying, not for himself, but for others. He prays specifically for the men who were with him in that upper chamber. But he prays not for them only. In v. 24 he broadens out his prayer and takes in all those who believe in him through the testimony of the apostles. This *sweeps us in*, and makes us participants in his petition. You and I are there, for have we not believed on account of the testimony of the Gospels which the apostles wrote? Now one of the things for which Jesus prays in this wonderful chapter is this; that all his followers may be united in one, through their union with God and him. On that account we choose No. 21 as the most choice number on this street.

**Betrayal Street.**—Chapter 18. In this chapter we have two betrayals. The one by Judas and the other by Peter, for as a matter of fact Peter did betray his Master and deny him before men. This is a most solemn part of the experience of the Master, and it shows how deep the human heart can sink in the mire of sin. Judas, Peter, high priest, and council all combine here to put the best man that ever lived to shame. A bitter comment on the sinfulness of the human heart is this story, and one that is fitted to make angels weep for shame. “Away with him,” is the cry, and yet he was the one of all others who had blessed them and who was willing to bless them still more abundantly. I think that the most important number in this street is No. 37, for in it the Master tells us the nature of his kingdom, which is one

of truth, and tells us that all who are seekers after truth will hear his voice.

**Calvary Street.**—Chapter 19. Of course all will agree as to the naming of this street. It would be well for the teacher to be well acquainted with all that went on in this street, for it is the most important of all the streets of this City of Truth. Here we mark No. 18 as the most important number, for it records the crucifixion of the Redeemer of the world.

**Resurrection Street.**—Chapter 20. Here, too, there will be no difference of opinion as to the right name to be used. If it were not for the resurrection, all that had preceded in the story of Jesus Christ would be vain, for we should have not a living and victorious Saviour but only a dead Jesus. Our condition, then, would be that of the two as they walked to Emmaus, who said, "We had hoped," intimating that now they were without hope since their Master was dead. Shall we choose No. 19 as the most significant number in this street? If we do we shall not be wrong.

**Peter Street.**—Chapter 21. Here there is room for much difference of opinion as to the name of the street. Some in my classes called it Fishing Street, others Farewell Street or Love Street. We have chosen the name given above because Peter comes into view so prominently. In this interview between the Lord and Peter, we have the restoration of him who so vehemently denied his Lord. Here the best number is No. 17, and from it we all in these later days may learn what is our duty in our service for the blessed Lord.

In looking over these chapters, as we have now briefly

done, has it struck you how large a part of the narrative has been devoted to the last seven days of our Lord's life? Chaps. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, are all given to the events of those seven days, while all the rest of the Gospel covers three years and a half. Why is this the case? Because those seven days were by far the most important in the life of our Lord. All of the evangelists seem to have felt this, for all of them have given especial emphasis to these days. Take up Matthew, and you will see that he gives chaps. 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, to this part of our Master's life. Mark devotes chaps. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and a part of 16 to these same days. Luke gives a part of chap. 19, from v. 28 on, and chaps. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, to the story. All this proves what we have said, namely, that the evangelists looked upon the events of this week as of the highest importance, and on that account have such full narrative of the events of that last week.

**Postscript.**—If you desire, you can do the same thing as that which we have done above with each of the other Gospels.

## CHAPTER VII

### ACTS—BY STREETS

IN the last chapter we gave a kind of outline of the Gospel of St. John, looked at as a City of Truth, and we named the streets of that city, and gave the most important number (verse) in each street. We now take up the book of Acts, which is one of the most important in the New Testament, and will once more adopt this method of giving a bird's-eye view of this book. To each chapter we will give a name, as though it were a street in this City of Truth, and in each chapter will indicate a number, as that of the most important verse in that street. Of course we give only our own judgment in this way, and leave it for the teacher to study the book for himself, to see whether his judgment accords with ours or whether he finds some reason for a change in name of street or number.

**Ascension Street.**—So called because in this chapter we have a fuller account of our blessed Lord's ascension than in any other chapter in the Bible. From this chapter we learn what became of our Lord when his work on earth was completed. We know that we have not only a risen Lord, but one who has ascended on high, where he now is. The most important number in this street is difficult to determine. Perhaps it is No. 8, for that contains the wonderful promise of power that was to be given to the disciples. But some

may prefer No. 11, since that foretells the return of our Lord in glory. Which do you think is the most important number in this street?

**Power Street.**—Here we have the record of the giving of that spiritual power to the disciples that they so much needed. To them was given the command to begin the conquest of the world for Christ. Yet they had neither wealth, nor position, nor education, nor influence. Most of them were “ignorant and unlearned men.” The promise of Acts 1 : 8 is in this chapter fulfilled, so that in one day Peter won more converts than Jesus had won in his three and a half years of ministry. Surely all then will agree that this is the right name for this street. The most important truth in this street dwells at No. 4, for here we are given the source of that power which was so irresistible. No mere human power was that which won three thousand souls for the Master in one day.

**Cripple Street.**—Peter’s sermon that day was based on the miracle of the healing of the cripple at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. This is why we call this Cripple Street. In consequence of this miracle and sermon, many believed, and were saved. The most important number is in our judgment No. 19, for there we find laid down the way of salvation.

**Warning Street.**—We give it this name because in it we find the first warning given to the disciples by the ecclesiastical party that they should not teach in the name of Jesus. These ecclesiastics had hoped that with the crucifixion of Jesus his influence would cease, and they would be left in peace. But in this they found that they

were much mistaken. Indeed, the teachings of Jesus were now more widely received than they had been during his lifetime. This alarmed the priests and the members of the Sanhedrim, and they made up their minds that they must do something to stop the propagation of this doctrine. No. 19 is here the most important number, for it sets forth the conviction of the apostles that they must obey God at all hazards. They declared in the face of their persecutors that they would not cease to declare that which they had seen and heard, come what might. This was the true ground of their success, that they feared God more than man.

**Liar Street.**—This is an evil name for a street, is it not? We give it this name on account of the story of Ananias and his wife Sapphira. It contains the story of their greed and untruthfulness, and is a most solemn warning against all telling of that which is not true. It is worth our while at this juncture to pause and ask ourselves the question, “If God were to strike all dead to-day who indulge in lies, how many people would be left alive in this world?” Would you be one of these, or would you suffer the fate of Ananias and his wife?

I know that there are other important truths in this chapter, but this one has been selected to give the name of this street on account of its solemn import. Perhaps the best number here is No. 4, for this sets forth the truth that all lies are offenses against God, and not merely against man.

**Stephen Street.**—Here we are first introduced to Stephen, who was also the first Christian martyr. His character is given to us in a few words. See them: “A



man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." Of course then he was also "full of power." This is a record which any man might well covet. Would this be your record, if your biography were written? What would you select as the most important number of this street? I take No. 8, as that sets forth the fact that the inner life of a man will inevitably govern his outer life. Stephen was full of faith and of spiritual power, and on that account did many blessed deeds. So it always will be. He who lives the inner life aright, will also live the outer life in the most blessed activity.

**Martyr Street.**—The major part of this chapter is taken up with the speech of Stephen before the council. The result of that address was that his enemies were filled with bitter rage. With one accord they broke up the meeting, and rushed him out of the city. They then proceeded to kill him on the spot. In this way he became the first Christian martyr, and his name has come down the centuries as that of the one who first sealed his confession of Christ with his blood. No. 60 is the most important one in this chapter, as it shows that the spirit of Jesus himself permeated his disciple. The prayer of the Master at his crucifixion was echoed by Stephen with his last breath.

**Philip Street.**—This is so called on account of the story of Philip and the Ethiopian, who, under Philip's guidance, found the truth and was baptized. I know that not all of this chapter is devoted to this story, but enough of it deals with the work of Philip the evangelist to give it this name by good right. No. 4 is the important number, for this tells how the truth was

spread. The persecuted disciples did not run from Jerusalem, holding their peace. This they might have done had they merely regarded their own safety. No, they went everywhere proclaiming the truth of a crucified and risen Saviour. This was most grand. If only believers in modern days would follow their example, the truth would spread much faster than it does. Believers in these days are far more given to silence about religious matters than they are to speech. This is most unfortunate.

**Conversion Street.**—Chapter 9 tells of the conversion of the great persecutor, Saul of Tarsus. In the history of the early church this was the most important event, next to the experience on the Day of Pentecost. For Saul was making havoc of the church and all believers were afraid of him. When he was converted, and became an advocate of the truth, we read, "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria." It is hard to choose the most important number in this street, because there is more than one very significant verse. But on the whole we take No. 6 as the most important, as it records the change in the attitude of Saul toward Jesus. One moment he is fierce against him, and the next he asks in submission, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This shows the vast change that came over the persecutor in an instant, when Jesus appeared to him in the way.

**Vision Street.**—Now we have to do with Peter, and his vision in Joppa. This is a most important event in the history of the church. Hitherto the apostles had no idea that any Gentile could be a believer unless he first

became a Jew, and submitted to Jewish ritual. In this chapter we have the story of how God told Peter that Jew and Gentile were now on the same footing in the kingdom of God, and that faith in Jesus, and not any form or ceremony, was the condition of membership in the church. No. 44 is the most important, for in this verse we are told that the Holy Spirit endorsed the teaching of Peter, and came upon the Gentiles whom Cornelius had invited to his house to hear the word spoken by the apostle. From that moment on, Gentiles could be numbered among the members of the church on condition of their accepting Jesus as their Saviour.

**Broad Street.**—In Vision Street we saw how God revealed to Peter the truth that Gentiles might be admitted to the church without first becoming Jews. But the church at large had not yet received this broad truth. In this chapter we read how the church was led into this wider truth. The events recorded in this chapter were of the highest importance, not only to the church of that day, but to the church of all time. If the events of these two chapters had never occurred, we in this day would still have to become Jews before we could belong to the church of God on earth. No. 18 is here the important number, as it records the fact that the church accepted the revelation, and was willing to act on it.

**Prison Street.**—From Broad Street to Prison Street is a short step, and Peter took it in short order. As yet Peter was the leader of the apostles. (Later on Paul took this place.) Now we find him in prison, while all the disciples are in despair. Through God's power, Peter is delivered, and the hearts of the believers are

made glad. In this street the important number is No. 7, for here we are given the superhuman character of the deliverance of the apostle.

**Mission Street.**—Up to the time of the events in this chapter, while there was much missionary work done by believers in general, there had been no organized work done by the church as a body. In this chapter we have the story of how the Holy Spirit led the church in Antioch to begin organized work for unbelievers. They appointed Barnabas and Saul to be their missionaries, and sent them forth with their best wishes and prayers. This chapter then in reality records the beginning of that missionary work which to this day is the duty and the glory of the church of Jesus Christ. No. 2 is the important number in this chapter, for it tells of how the missionary work was begun, and shows that it had a divine origin.

**Stoning Street.**—We call this street by this name because the most striking episode was the stoning of Paul in Lystra. In this town the apostle and his companion Barnabas had a most extraordinary experience. First they were mistaken for gods, and the people wanted to sacrifice to them. Then they were taken for miscreants, and poor Paul almost paid with his life for his fidelity to the truth. In this chapter perhaps we should select No. 23 as the most important, as here we learn that in all the churches that they founded, the apostles at once ordained elders, so that all things might be done decently and in order.

**Gentile Street.**—Why do we give this street this name? Because here we find the story of the great

debate in the church at Jerusalem, as to the admission of the Gentiles to the church of God. As this question was then settled for all time, and in the right way, we need not dwell on it any further. The most important number is No. 11, which records the willingness of the Mother Church to receive Gentiles merely on their faith in Jesus as their Saviour.

**Women Street.**—I had thought of calling this Europe Street, as in this chapter we have the account of the crossing of the Gospel from Asia to Europe. But on the whole it seemed wise to call it Women Street, as here we have the account of the blessing of two women by the Gospel of our blessed Lord. All religions save that of the Nazarene degrade woman. In no land except Christian lands is woman in the position in which God meant her to be. So in this chapter in which we have the story of the Pythoness and of Lydia, we have a kind of prophecy of the way in which women are blessed by the Gospel of the grace of God. The most important number here is No. 31, in which we have the way of salvation given us in one sentence.

**Athens Street.**—It is easy to see why this name is selected. The major part of this chapter is given to the experience of Paul in Athens. It was not a very encouraging experience, for while Paul was not persecuted in that city, he also left no church there, as he did in so many other cities. My impression as to the reason why the Athenians did not persecute the apostle is that they cared so little for religion anyway that they did not think it worth the while to do anything but scoff. If this be so, it is easy to see why no church was founded

there. The important verse is No. 31, where we find the apostle speaking of the resurrection of Jesus, and of the coming judgment.

**Corinth Street.**—It is not hard to see why we give this name to this street. In Corinth, Paul stayed for eighteen months. Here, too, he was persecuted, but here he left a powerful church, to which he wrote two wonderful epistles later on. Here the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles, as the Jews scornfully rejected it. No. 9 is most important, for it records God's promise of protection to his servant, and the assurance of much fruitage as his reward.

**Diana Street.**—We are in Ephesus, in this chapter. In that city was one of the seven wonders of the world, namely, the Temple of Diana. Here Paul stayed for three whole years, and was incessantly active all the time. Here, too, the Word was much blessed, so that multitudes turned to the Lord. But here, too, Paul met with much opposition. During his stay it was that the great riot took place, in which the Ephesians screamed for two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Here, too, the great bonfire took place in which they burned about \$50,000 worth of books of divination, as a testimony that they had abandoned all their curious and superstitious arts. No. 19 is most important, as it records the story of this bonfire, which bore witness to the genuineness of the work of the Spirit.

**Farewell Street.**—That which characterizes this chapter as unique is the touching farewell of the apostle to the believers in Ephesus. For three years he had wrought among them with wonderful fidelity, and now that he

knew he never should see them again, his words are most tender. The manner of his work may be seen from v. 20, and in acting as he did the apostle set a good example to all Sunday-school teachers, and to all preachers the world over. Not only in public, but from house to house he taught, as he found opportunity. Look at No. 32 and see if you do not agree with me that this is the most important number in the street. In it you find the source of all our spiritual power, namely, the Word of God. He who thinks he will ever grow strong while at the same time he neglects the Word, will find himself woefully mistaken.

**Mob Street.**—This is a chapter of violence. Here we see Paul almost killed, and that by his own countrymen. Had it not been for the Romans, Paul would never have left the temple area alive. In this street the best number is No. 13, for in it we see portrayed the indomitable spirit that animated this man. He counted not his life dear to himself so long as he was in the way of duty. Is that your spirit?

**Defense Street.**—Here we have the apostle defending himself and his actions before his fellow countrymen. He spoke from a stairway, surrounded by Roman soldiers. When he began to speak there was a great silence, but before he closed there was a vast tumult. Perhaps No. 22 is the most important one, for in it we see the vindictive nature of sin, as it rules men's hearts, and leads them to pay no attention to the truth, but to insist on their own selfish way, even to the taking of human life if that be possible.

**Rescue Street.**—Forty men had banded themselves

together in an oath not to eat or drink until they had assassinated Paul. In this chapter we are told how Paul was rescued from this band of assassins. It is a most interesting narrative, and repays careful study. As setting forth one of the very many experiences of Paul's life, No. 10 may be taken as important. Here we see the terrible excitement in which the council broke up, and the great danger in which Paul was for a few moments.

**Felix Street and Festus Street.**—These streets run parallel to each other. The reason why they are thus named is apparent. In the first street No. 16 is to be noted, for a reason easily apprehended, and in the second street No. 10, since in that verse we have the reason why Paul was sent to Rome.

**Agrippa Street.**—So called on account of the appearance of Paul before King Agrippa. Here perhaps the most prominent number would be No. 29, where we find Paul expressing his desire for the king and for all who were listening to him. It was a most sweet Christian wish, and one that all Christians should cherish for those who are not followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Shipwreck Street.**—This is a most dramatic chapter, and the whole story of the shipwreck is told in masterly style. All will agree that the proper name is given to this chapter. The most important verse is No. 24, for in it we have once more God's message of comfort to his servant.

**Malta Street.**—Here again we see Paul taken once for a murderer and once for a god. Here the most important number is No. 31, which sets forth in one sentence the manner of the apostle's whole life and activity.



## CHAPTER VIII

### MISSIONARY INSTRUCTION IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*By Rev. George H. Trull*

"If you wish to introduce any idea into a nation's life you must put it in the schools." Von Humboldt, the great German statesman, never uttered truer words than these. It is quite as true that whatever ideas need to be implanted in the church's life should be taught in the Sunday-schools. A great field of opportunity has hitherto been largely neglected, the children have not been thoroughly instructed in missions in the Sunday-school, and the result has been an apathetic church. Many adults show little interest in missionary work because of lack of knowledge, and, in consequence, the heathen languish. We need, therefore, to awake at once to the unrealized possibilities of missionary instruction in the Sunday-school. *Within a generation there may be a church whose intelligence about missions and zeal for them has never been equaled in the world's history. In the hands of the Sunday-school superintendents and teachers of to-day lies the real solution of the missionary problem.* If the church exists to-day to carry out the principles instituted by her founder, then those principles must be taught in the Sunday-school.

**AIMS.**—What really are our aims? What satisfies us? Are we content with numbers, a large attendance,

the memorizing and repeating of Scripture, the Creed, and the Catechism, the recitation of the lesson of the day? All this is assuredly excellent; but is it sufficient? Unless a scholar is led to know Christ intimately, and unless Christianity is made so real and vital that he will think it worth while *to pass it on*, then we are failing of our highest possibilities.

**FOUR FACTS TO PONDER.**—**First Fact.**—There are very few Sunday-schools to-day which have any *adequate* or systematic course of missionary instruction. Observe, I do not say that they have *no* missionary information given them, or that they make no offering to missionary causes, but that comparatively few have *adequate* courses of missionary instruction.

**Second Fact.**—The need of the heathen world is to-day very great. Eight hundred million people are still in ignorance of Jesus Christ. Men may say all they like about the heathen religions being good enough for the heathen, and that they should not be disturbed. To such I would commend a brief article by Mr. Robert E. Speer, costing but two cents, and entitled: "The Non-Christian Religions Inadequate to Meet the Needs of Men." (Order from "Daily Bible," 541 Lexington Avenue, New York.)

**Third Fact.**—The church's obligation to give the Gospel to the heathen world. We cannot escape Christ's command: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation."

**Fourth Fact.**—If this is the church's duty to-day, then it is no less the Sunday-school's; for the Sunday-school is an integral part of the church, not an independent

organization. "It is the church in its Bible teaching and studying service," says Marion Lawrance.

With these facts in mind let us clear away, if possible, the *objections against* mission study in the Sunday-school; then consider the *reasons for* such study, and follow with some *methods how*.

## I. OBJECTIONS AGAINST

**First objection.**—*The Bible should be the sole text-book of the Sunday-school, and nothing else should be introduced.* But missionary study does not displace the Bible; it simply emphasizes one of its most important teachings, and illustrates it with striking facts. Says Dr. Forbush in a recent article: "Missions are not a substitute for, but an extension of the Bible. The Bible is chiefly a book of biography, and missions are an extension of Bible biography. They are the continuation of the book of Acts. 'I never knew the Bible until I knew Judson,' said one." While the Bible must always be *the* text-book of the Sunday-school, yet for the better grasping of its truths and teaching we must have other text-books and manuals which will present its history, geography, doctrines, etc., in systematic form, to be easily grasped by our young people. Mission study should in no wise displace the regular Bible lesson of the day, but should be made *supplemental* thereto.

**Second objection.**—*The brevity of the Sunday-school session, and the seeming impossibility of crowding anything more into it.* But just here system will accomplish a great deal. If the session is one hour long, ten minutes

can be devoted to the opening exercises ; ten to closing, thirty to the lesson, and ten will still be left for whatever supplemental work may be desired, and missionary instruction can come in here. If the session is one hour and a quarter long, so much the better : fifteen minutes for opening, fifteen for closing, thirty for lesson, and fifteen for missionary instruction.

**Third objection.**—No suitable material for use. This objection is also being met. If the material already available is not adaptable for use in your school, then have your own missionary committee prepare suitable material. This is not an impossibility, for it *has* been done, and could be done again. Examine what is already obtainable, and see if you cannot make at least temporary use of it. The Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, United Presbyterians, and the Young People's Missionary Movement all have courses or programs for use in Sunday-schools.

## II. REASONS FOR

**First reason.**—Because the inadequacy of former methods is responsible in large measure for much of the present apathy in the church, in which eighty-seven per cent. of the membership comes from the Sunday-school. This being true, it is easy to see that the Sunday-school in the past has failed in its duty of providing missionary instruction, and is responsible in large measure that so many men and women to-day have no interest in the missionary cause.

**Second reason.**—The crying need is for education, and the Sunday-school is the natural and logical place for in-

struction, being the recognized educational institution of the church.

**Third reason.**—Because scholars in the Sunday-school are in the most impressionable period of life. It is the *formative* period, and if they are ever to be interested in missions, then is the time to begin.

**Fourth reason.**—Because of the large numbers enrolled in the Sunday-school, fourteen million in North America alone. While mission bands for boys and girls do excellent work, yet their membership is not a tithe of those in the Sunday-schools. The time, therefore, to give missionary instruction is when we have the children, and that is at the Sunday-school hour.

**Fifth reason.**—Because in the interpretation of current events mission study will give Sunday-school scholars a new and proper perspective. If a boy reads in the daily papers of China sending an embassy abroad to study Western ideas, or of the English Expedition to Thibet, or of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, he will learn to regard these things not merely in their political aspect, but in their relation to the progress of the kingdom of God. But let us now turn to methods.

### III. METHODS HOW

1. **Missionary programs and exercises** in which a few members of the school take part. "The Twenty Christian Centuries," by Dr. Paull, is commended. It can be obtained at 501 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia. Also "Missionary Exercises for the Sunday-school," published by the Young People's Missionary Movement, 156 Fifth Avenue.

The chief disadvantage of this method is that it reaches vitally comparatively few—only those who take part in the exercises—and the other members of the school are simply spectators.

2. The missionary incident plan illustrative of the regular International Lesson. These incidents can be given by the teachers in their classes. Good material is found in the *Baptist Missionary Magazine* for senior scholars, and *Around the World* for junior scholars. The former costs \$1.00 a year, and the latter 25 cents, and both can be ordered from the Baptist Board, Tremont Temple, Boston. The incidents are largely denominational, but many of them can be used by any school.

3. Another way of using the missionary incident plan is to have the illustration given from the desk rather than in the classes. Some schools find it profitable to devote five minutes every Sunday to the giving of a missionary incident from the desk which may or may not illustrate the lesson of the day.

The disadvantage of these two methods is that while all may profit more or less by the incident, as it is told them, the effort of presenting the material has been done by others than the scholars.

4. The leaflet plan which aims to give systematic instruction in leaflet form. This has a distinct advantage over the other plans mentioned, in that each scholar can take home with him the leaflet, and personal effort on his part is required. The Episcopal, United Presbyterian, Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches all publish such leaflets. The chief disadvantages of this method are that

the leaflet is usually lost or little regard is given it. Something in a more permanent form seems necessary.

5. The text-book plan,<sup>1</sup> therefore, has the value of permanence, and incorporates the other good features of the leaflet plan. These are as follows :

(a) Home work on the part of the pupil. If any lasting impression is to be made on the scholar's mind, there must be some effort put forth on his part. This the leaflet or text-book makes possible.

(b) Class work on Missionary Sunday then follows the home preparation. In schools that have supplemental work, the mission study should be taken as the supplemental lesson for the day, devoting to it ten or fifteen minutes. The class work should consist not in mere recitation of facts in the text-book, but there should be enthusiastic discussion led by a well-informed teacher. He must have new and attractive information to present from a wider range of reading.

(c) Platform work.—In addition to home work and class discussion, there should also be public exercises from the desk on Missionary Sunday. All of the hymns, the Scripture, and the prayers should be mis-

<sup>1</sup> Two series of text-books, the second in both Junior and Senior Grades, have been issued by the Missionary Committee of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, and used in their own school. Single copies postpaid, first series, fifteen cents; second series, Junior Grade, twelve cents; Senior Grade, fourteen cents; to be obtained from Foreign Missions Library, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Cheaper in quantities. The committee plans to issue a third series in both Junior and Senior Grades, covering four Home Mission topics, and six on India. If a sufficient number of schools will use the studies, the books can be issued at five cents per copy.

sionary in character. If the missionary under discussion had a favorite hymn, let the school sing it. If any passage of Scripture is connected with any particular incident in his life, read it. For example, the 121st and 135th Psalms used by Livingstone at family worship the day he left home for Africa. The session should close with a few pointed remarks by some qualified speaker and an earnest prayer or stirring hymn.

### ACCESSORIES

Certain accessories are found very valuable in connection with the missionary study above indicated.

1. Pictures and small maps in the class will be found of great value. The Orient pictures, published by the Baptist Board of Boston, illustrate work in most of the missionary fields. On the map the geographical location of mission stations or a missionary's travels can be located.

2. The stereopticon will afford much pleasure and profit to the school after a course on any country. Such a lecture given some night during the week, to which the parents as well as the children are invited, will prove a great attraction.

3. Prayer should, of course, be constant in connection with mission study. One of the classes may be entrusted with the responsibility of presenting topics for prayer, suggested by the mission study of the day. These subjects can be prayed for in the school, and, in addition, a certain topic can be remembered by all in their petitions throughout the week. Cycles of prayer can be obtained



from the denominational boards. An excellent one for the year is published by the Student Volunteer Movement, and can be purchased for three cents, at 3 West 29th Street, New York City.

4. **Benevolence.**—The scholars should be taught that they can have an immediate share in the great cause of missions. Their prayers should be accompanied by their gifts, and these gifts should be thank-offerings, and represent some sacrifice. It will arouse interest in the school to ask all to keep a record of how they spend their money for one week, reporting to the superintendent the following Sunday. These reports will serve as a basis for a spirited talk as to how much we spend for missions, compared with other expenditures. An excellent chart to use in connection with this is one of the series published by the Young People's Missionary Movement, entitled: "How Americans Spend Their Money."

The American Baptist Missionary Union has an excellent scheme to show where the money goes. It is called "The Missionary Dollar." The dollar is divided into ten dimes, and a statement is given as to how each dime helps some different branch of work: For example, Dime No. 1 helps to send out new missionaries, and a picture of the recent appointees to the field is given. Dime No. 2 goes to pay the missionary's salary; Dime No. 3 aids the work of education; Dime No. 4 helps the hospitals and medical work; Dime No. 5, the work among women and children, and so on. Each scholar collecting \$1.00 is given a beautifully illustrated booklet, describing the work of each dime.

5. **Charts and maps.**—A large missionary map of the

world should always be displayed on Missionary Sunday, and charts of various kinds are also valuable, giving missionary statistics and showing the world's need. The Young People's Missionary Movement publishes an excellent series of these. One can also make his own charts, which will give large opportunity for personal investigation and originality. Epigrammatic sayings of great missionaries can be used to excellent advantage. Here are some examples: "The end of the geographical feat is only the beginning of the enterprise" (Livingstone). "I place no value on anything I have or may possess except in its relation to the kingdom of Jesus Christ" (Livingstone). "Prayer and pains through faith in Jesus Christ will do anything" (John Eliot). "Am I not here, the link between dying men and the dying Christ?" (Mackay).

6. The bulletin board is a very valuable adjunct to give the latest missionary information gleaned from current newspapers and magazines. *The Missionary Review of the World* and *The Record of Christian Work* will furnish much valuable material. The board should be put in some conspicuous place. To a class of older scholars can well be entrusted the duty of gathering items, which should be changed weekly.

7. The Missionary Library.—In order to follow up the work of Missionary Sunday, there should be a good library from which the scholars can procure interesting books. The text-books and exercises on Missionary Day are simply to be a starting-point for further reading and investigation. Excellent libraries, at greatly reduced rates, can be obtained from the Young People's Mis-

sionary Movement and the Student Volunteer Movement. The "Little Cousin" series for younger children is also valuable. It is not enough to stock the shelves with good books, but they must be read. In order to do this, let a member of the Missionary Committee tell an interesting incident from some new missionary book that will whet the appetite. Immediate calls for the book will be the result.

8. Souvenirs are used in some schools, and highly prized. An ingenious leader will find here a rich field of opportunity. For example, if Africa is being studied, the program for the day could be placed on a card cut in the shape of the Dark Continent. Its cover could be all black; its only white spots being the mission stations. Inside the regular program could be written.

If William Carey were the topic, a gilt card cut to represent a gold nugget might be given to the scholars with Carey's dates, and some information attached; the idea being that Carey went to India as into a mine, not for gold, but for souls, which were as precious as nuggets.

If Paton were studied, a picture of a well could be drawn on a card, the digging of which well, Paton states, broke the backbone of heathenism in Aniwa.

9. A missionary museum or cabinet, in which curios should be collected, will prove of permanent value and interest. If any persons of the congregation travel abroad or visit the mission fields, they can be asked to bring home some curios. Articles can also be obtained directly from missionaries or by purchase.

10. Correspondence with missionaries is also a means

of promoting missionary interest. While many missionaries are too busy to write personal letters to many members of a school, the heart of many a lonely man and woman on the foreign field would be greatly cheered to receive a letter from the home land from a child. While we would not encourage the children to expect answers from the missionaries, experience has proved that the missionaries do appreciate the children's efforts, and send replies. If the school is supporting any particular missionary, and the children know him, they will, of course, have a greater personal interest in communicating with him.

**11. Photographs.**—If the school supports a missionary his picture should certainly be familiar to all. A large copy might well be hung in the Sunday-school room, and under it photographs of his stations and his work, or a portfolio could be made of these, and added to from time to time. A small reproduction of a missionary's photograph could be obtained in large numbers at small cost, and put on some one of the missionary programs, and used as a souvenir.

**12. Missionary class socials** at the home of the teacher can prove very helpful. Different members of the class may come prepared to ask each other questions from the course that has been studied. A debate as to the relative value of the different branches of missionary endeavor, or what missionary they consider to have been the greatest hero, and why, can be profitably discussed. Valuable suggestions along this line will be found in "Fuel for Missionary Fires," by Miss Belle M. Brain. A wide-awake teacher will want it.

**Conclusion.**—The real aim of missionary instruction in the Sunday-school should be to arouse such a growing interest in world-wide missions that all the scholars shall be imbued with the missionary spirit, and devote their lives to the cause, whether they remain in the home land or go to the uttermost parts of the earth. Sunday-school teachers, yours is a great responsibility and opportunity. In your classes now are the future members, office-bearers, and ministers of the church—yes, and missionaries, too. May God give you this vision!

## BOOK II

# The Scholar or Why We Teach

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## CHAPTER I

### OUR SPIRITUAL WORK

**We now consider the spiritual side of the Sunday-school.**—Primarily, the Sunday-school is not an educational institution, but a religious assembly. Of course we know that we must teach our scholars the history of the dealings of God with men, as recorded in the Word. But that aim is subsidiary to the higher aim of producing Christlike character in those under our care. If we fail in this latter aim, all possible success in any other line is vain. We must aim at the heart and life, and not merely at the intellect. This fundamental fact needs to be borne constantly in mind, or we shall make a gigantic failure in our work. But just because so many forget this, we are constrained to emphasize it at this time.

To begin with, then, the superintendent must be a truly religious man. No stream can rise higher than its source; and if the superintendent is not what he ought to be, what can we expect of the teachers? He must be a man of personal piety, and one much given to prayer. On him rest great responsibilities, and to him the teachers (to say nothing of the scholars) look as their leader. Yet there are many men in the su-

perintendent's office whose piety seems to be a minus quantity. They may be energetic and clever, but all that will not avail to "fill the bill." Nothing can take the place of that which is "the root of the matter." Teachers will soon find out whether their leader is one to whose heart the welfare of the school on its spiritual side lies near. They will detect it in his prayers, in his review, and in his general deportment. If you who read these lines are a superintendent, ask yourself at this point this question, "Is my life what it should be to help me lead my teachers aright?" And, if it is not, do not by any means think of resigning, but at once see to it that your life starts on the up grade.

What about the music leader?—Is it needful that he, too, be truly religious? From the practice of many of our churches, the true answer will be, "No, that is unimportant. If only he can lead the music well, that is quite sufficient." But this reply is altogether wrong. How can a man whose life is not right lead the school in the service of worship each week? He may use the words of the hymns, and sing correctly, but how can he praise God if he be not a servant of God? An unconverted music leader will pick hymns only for their musical value, and not on account of their spiritual usefulness. His work will be of no use to the school from the standpoint of its spiritual life. But he who loves the Word, and him who gave the Word, will sing with the spirit as well as with the understanding, and so will help elevate the spiritual side of the school most powerfully.

My own feeling is that not only superintendent and music leader should be truly godly people, but that all

the officers of the school should be the same. This will give homogeneity to the official corps of the school, and so power in all its various activities. A godly librarian can do much to direct the reading of the scholars in the right direction, and a godly secretary will take a much deeper interest in the recording of the school roll than one who is not godly. If in all of our work we have this one object in mind, namely, the highest welfare of our scholars, the results will be far more gratifying than they now are.

If what has been said above is true of the officers of the school, it is even more so (if possible) of the teachers. A secretary may do his work fairly well, though he be not a Christian, but how can one who is not a Christian be a successful teacher? "Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" How can I lead a scholar to Christ, if I have not trodden that pathway myself first? Otherwise, what am I but a blind leader of the blind, and in that case the end is disastrous.


But we are ready to go further than this. Not only should every teacher be a true Christian, but every teacher should be an *earnest* follower of the Master. There are Christians and Christians. I fear that the majority of professed believers are lukewarm, and, therefore, unfit for service in their Lord's cause. Is a doctor who takes a lukewarm interest in the recovery of his patients one whom you would like to employ? How much less is it right for us who have the eternal interests of our scholars under our care to be anything but "red hot" in our zeal for them? As the Psalmist preferred Jerusalem above his highest joy, so should we



care for our classes in their spiritual interests above all else that can engage our attention.

Now, turning to the scholars, let me remind all teachers that our true aim in all our work for and with them is twofold. First, we must aim at their conversion. "Ye must be born again," said our blessed Lord, and that is as true to-day as it was nineteen hundred years ago. Until this has been brought about by the divine blessing, we have not reached the very first of our aims. To this end, therefore, all our efforts should be concentrated. When, by the Holy Spirit blessing, our scholars have really given their hearts to the Lord, then our aim changes. Now we aim at their spiritual upbuilding in every Christian grace. Of course we now use the truths of the lessons with this end in view. Grander work than this of leading our scholars to the blessed Christ for pardon, and then trying to develop in them his likeness, angels could not desire. Yet just this is the work that God has committed to each teacher.

Yet in spite of all that has been said above, I find many teachers who seem to think that if they keep good order in their classes, and are able to impart some knowledge of history and geography to their scholars, they have fulfilled all righteousness. I have seen "banner classes" where every effort has been made to secure the "banner," and in which that seemed to satisfy the highest ambition of the teacher. This proves that we are always in danger of being satisfied with that which is external to the omission of that which is internal. Not that we would depreciate regularity of attendance and correctness of deportment, for without these no



abiding results of any kind can be attained. But that to which we wish to direct the teacher's attention, is the fact that these things are not enough. They are means to an end, but they are not the end itself.

In order to reach the highest aim the teacher must be able to do more than merely see to it that the scholars know the lesson. In fact, before ever we can make the best use of the lesson itself, we ought to know many things about the scholar. Does not the doctor who visits the patient try to ascertain as much as possible about the habits of the one for whom he is to prescribe? Is there anything about his patient that is of no importance to the wise practitioner? Just so should it be with us in our spiritual ministering to the wants of our scholars. And yet there are many teachers who know but little about the home life or the private life of their classes.

Very lately I took a class in my own Sunday-school, of boys. In the course of the lesson I ascertained that only one boy ever prayed at all. That one only used a very short prayer that his mother had taught him and he rattled it off to me like lightning. So I had six prayerless boys before me and one formalist. The instant that I made the above discovery, my whole line of teaching changed, and I tried to meet the especial wants of those boys. If that class were to be mine for a series of weeks, all my work would be much influenced by that one fact which I have just mentioned. To work with such boys as though they were regular in their private devotions, would be to fail to meet one of their most present and most crying wants.

The spiritually minded teacher will also seek to know

all about the home life of the individual scholar, so as better to apply the truth in each case. Our scholars are not to be treated as though they were so much dough to be made into crackers, all of which are alike. No two scholars are alike in all particulars. If I have a boy whose father is a liquor dealer, I shall treat his case very differently from that of a boy whose father is an elder in the church. And if I have a scholar who is trying hard to live a Christian life, but who meets with ridicule at home, for that scholar I shall have from time to time an especial message of comfort and guidance.

**We may go still farther than this.**—What are the business surroundings of our scholars? It is of the highest importance that the teacher know this. If these surroundings are dangerous, then we shall try to meet just the environment of the scholar. I once had a beautiful young girl in my school at the lace counter in a great department store. There she was in great temptation on account of evil-minded men, who came to that counter to engage her in conversation, and invite her to go with them to the theater and other places of amusement. Would it not be worth the while of her Sunday-school teacher to know of this, in order to be a friend in need, and so a friend indeed? If I have a boy whose work is in the District Messenger Company, I ought to know it, and realize that his daily associates are far from what they should be, for, as a set, these boys are exceedingly low in their talk, and equally so in their walk.

Then, too, in the matter of the reading of our boys and girls, the spiritual teacher should know what they read. Only yesterday I rode in the cars by the side of

a young girl who was reading a book that was far from elevating. As I glanced at two pages of her book, I saw that twice the young man "rapturously embraced the girl." Much of our work in the class is undone because of the books that our young people are reading. To counteract all this, we must know what they are interested in, and then, if it be of a debasing character, do our best to supplant it by something purer and more elevating.

Returning now to the proposition that our first aim is the conversion of our scholars, and our second aim their upbuilding in Christian life, we may well ask the question, "What means should we take to reach the first of these aims?" We reply: There are certain truths that we must impress on the minds of our scholars, and ask the Holy Spirit to impress on their hearts, before we can expect any definite result. It is perfectly clear that no scholar will want to ask for pardon unless that scholar is *convinced and convicted of sin*. We need not expect to see any very deep conviction of sin on the part of young children, though in actual experience this is sometimes met with. But *some* consciousness of ill-desert there must be, or the scholar will not feel any need of divine pardon. This conviction we should try to reach by impressing on the scholar his shortcomings in matters of daily life. For example, there is the command to obey one's parents. Few are the children who are not conscious of having broken this law. There is the matter of untruthfulness, and of dishonesty in small things, and of evil speaking, or, with boys, of profanity. Only last Sunday in teaching a class of girls the lesson of the casting out of the demoniac, I drew out from them the kinds

of evil spirits that dwelt in their hearts. They gave me the following: Lies, dishonesty, hatred, disobedience, bad words.

What a list that was for them to enumerate!—On that it was not hard for the teacher to try and impress on them their need of something to cleanse them from these wicked things. How can people with hearts like these, unchanged, go to heaven, where all is pure and Christ-like? Over and over again, the spiritual teacher will dwell on these sins, and try to make a deep impression of *personal sin* on the hearts of his pupils. Because this is not done as frequently as it should be, our scholars have but vague ideas of sin against God, and so have but feeble experience of conviction or contrition, and therefore they feel but slightly the need of repentance. Aim, therefore, always to arouse a conviction of sin in the consciences of your scholars.

I fear that many a time children feel a sense of guilt, but it does not go any further. Consciousness of sin makes them uneasy, but in course of time this passes away, and their consciences are at rest again. Such scholars should be taught that as soon as we feel ourselves guilty of any sin before God, we should always *confess it* to him in prayer, and ask for his *pardon*. We should then forsake that sin, asking God for power to resist the temptation when it comes again. A very good verse to teach our scholars in this connection is the following:

“ 'Tis not enough to say  
We're sorry and repent,  
Yet still go on from day to day,  
Just as we always went.

Repentance is to leave  
The sin we loved before,  
And show that we in earnest grieve  
By doing so no more."

Now comes the question of pardon for sin committed. The penitent child should be led to look to God for present pardon, in accordance with his Word. "If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God's promises are true, and we may rely on them absolutely. Let not the scholar who has gone to God with honest confession entertain any doubt as to what God will do. He will pardon that very moment. Here, too, I have found the use of a verse most helpful in the case of many children. If they understand its meaning, it expresses just what they should feel.

"Jesus take this heart of mine,  
Make it pure and wholly thine.  
Thou hast bled and died for me,  
I will, henceforth, live to thee."

But the spiritual-minded teacher will not rest here. This is only the beginning of the child's Christian life. Now comes the consecration of that life to the will of God. This is expressed in the last line of the verse given above. We are saved by God, to serve him, and that profession of conversion that is not followed by real service is vain. Conversion having been reached, there comes the whole of Christian nurture of which we have spoken as the second aim of the true teacher. Here is where very many teachers who do truly aim at the conversion of their scholars come short. They think

that when the boy or girl is converted, and has joined the church, their work is largely done. Oh, no! It is only just begun. Now comes that long process of Christian instruction in duties of all kinds. Now comes that broadening of the vision of duty, so that it shall dominate the life and shape the character of the child believer.

In guiding the scholar in this line of Christian growth and duty, we must see to it that he makes the proper use of two things, namely, private prayer and the Word. Without these no one can possibly grow in grace. But many of our scholars come from homes where there is no true prayer, and no reading of the Word. They do not know how to use the Bible in any way that is helpful. Instruction in Bible-reading is what they need, as well as instruction in the matter of how to pray, and what to pray for. Well does the writer remember that when he was a boy-Christian, he got more help from simple "daily exercises" than from much of his Bible-reading. Books like "The Words and Mind of Jesus," and "The Faithful Promiser," were most helpful to him in throwing light on some passages of the Word in the matter of duty. (These booklets are published by the American Tract Society.) Then there are those most beautiful little books by Frances Ridley Havergal called "Royal Commands" and "Loyal Responses," which I have used much in my work for the upbuilding of young Christians. These cost little, but are most helpful to the young soldier battling for the Master.

The spiritual teacher will not be satisfied with merely teaching the lesson, but will now and again ask the young believer to wait behind a few moments for more

private conversation. Then the teacher can find out in detail for what the scholar prays,—whether he prays morning and night, or only at night; whether the scholar prays before getting into bed, or after. These are all apparently small matters, but in reality, they are very important. Talking over these personal matters alone with the scholar, the teacher can correct mistakes, and give loving counsel to the scholar, which shall be of very great value. This personal contact with the scholar is of all the more vital importance if that scholar comes from a godless home. For in that case all the instruction and sympathy that the scholar gets must come from the teacher. Pity then if that source of power and comfort fails, is it not?

Now to condense the main points at which the spiritual teacher should aim, may we put it as follows? In all our work we should aim at





## CHAPTER II

### MISTAKES THAT HURT OUR BIBLE SCHOOLS

*By Rev. A. H. McKinney, PH. D.*

Great wisdom is not necessary to enable one to point out the mistakes of another. The one who wishes to improve, however, must avoid those mistakes which are hurtful. To do this he must know wherein he fails. No one can remain in the largest room in the world—THE ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT—without looking frequently into the mirror, which is an important article of its furniture, in order to learn what sort of a person he is. During the past few years the writer has had opportunities to visit a large number of Bible schools. His purpose in calling attention to the mistakes that hurt these schools is that he may suggest *how they may be avoided*. The suggestions are made with the view of helping the average schools, especially those which carry on their work under great difficulties. Here are some of the MISTAKES which are expressed in current statements:—

It is a mistake to say

“We are doing the best we can under the circumstances.”—Many earnest but mistaken workers block all attempts at reform by this declaration. In many cases it is not true, but simply an excuse for inertia. In other cases, while it is in a measure true, it is false to declare that better conditions cannot be evolved for the purpose

of more efficient work in the Bible school. Here are some workers that belong to a school carried on in a building which has only one room. All appeals for better work are met with the declaration: "We have but one room. We are doing the best we can under the circumstances." Here is a lady who, at a convention, determined to better her circumstances so far as school work is concerned. So she went back to the little one-roomed church, where the Bible-school sessions are held, and by a skilful use of screens made of very low-priced materials she divided the room into sections, so that the three departments of that school—primary, junior, and senior—meet in corners of their own, which for practical work are virtually separate rooms. Any one with grit, go, and gumption may do the same. Those who succeed best in any line of effort do not give way to circumstances, but improve them.

It is a mistake to say

"Our school is peculiar."—Indeed it is. Every school is peculiar. No two schools have exactly the same idiosyncrasies of human nature with which to contend, the same obstacles to overcome. Some schools, however, are more peculiar than others. Peculiar persons, as a rule, live in a world of their own, refusing to benefit their fellows or to be benefited by them. So is it with a peculiar Bible school. The very best way in which to make and to keep it peculiar is for its workers to harp on this one string: "We are peculiar," and to refuse to receive suggestions from others or to give help to others. The best plan for getting a Bible school out of ruts—which is another way of saying peculiar—is for its

workers to mingle with workers in successful schools, learn their methods, and, in a common-sense way, adapt them to local needs.

It is a mistake to say

“We do not believe in organized Bible-school work.”—The school that is doing “the very best we can under the circumstances,” or that is looked upon as “a peculiar school,” is very likely officered by those who take no interest in organized efforts to improve Bible-school methods. They do not attend town, county, or state association meetings. Were a Bible-school worker’s institute held in their city or village, they would probably refuse to announce that fact from the desk in the belief that “we have no use for such things.” Occasionally, there is a great school that has such exceptional leaders that they can afford to ignore organized efforts for improvement, but even they are indebted to such movements for much that is good in their schools. Even if they are not, are they true to the spirit of Christ in their refusal to share what they have with others? The majority of schools, however, lose much by refusal to coöperate in organized effort. This may be proven by contrasting two schools, in similar fields and with similar resources, one of which reaps the benefits of the attendance of its workers at institutes, conventions, etc., the other of which holds aloof from such gatherings. At the first session of an institute a lady was very indignant because the conductor called attention to some of the mistakes that were hurting the Bible schools of the village where the conferences were held. At the last session she thanked him heartily, saying, “We are getting our eyes

open, and we will do better work in the future." The moral is obvious.

It is a mistake to say

"Time on the Lord's Day is not so valuable as on the world's days."—It is not formulated in language just in this way, but if "actions speak louder than words" this is what many superintendents declare in their schools. "He has two hundred men under him in the tannery and everything runs like clockwork there" was what was told me concerning the superintendent of a school which I was about to visit. This same man, who is so careful and so competent in his business, acted as if he had left his common sense outside when he entered the door of the Bible school. Not only was the session begun several minutes after the time set for the opening of the school, but fourteen minutes by the clock passed before the Bible class could begin its study, because of the interruptions to which it was subjected on account of the superintendent not having attended to necessary details before the opening of the school. The confusion manifested could have been avoided by a little planning beforehand. Only one day out of seven is given to the Lord. How zealous should his children be to make the very most of that day.

For another group of mistakes the superintendent is chiefly to blame.—If our brothers and our sisters in the superintendency could realize how much they personally have to do with the making or the unmaking of the school, they would take careful heed unto themselves and to the erroneously designated "little things" pertaining to their office. Some of the hurtful things

for which they are largely responsible are as follows :—

It is a mistake to show

**Lack of interest in the devotional exercises of the school.**—This is so apparent in many schools that it need but be referred to. The superintendent holds the key to the situation. If he comes to the school without a well-arranged order of exercises, if he does not vary his program from Sunday to Sunday, or if he does not carry out what he has planned without breaks, he will not interest the active minds before him, and, of course, will not have their attention. A well-arranged order of exercises, never twice in succession exactly the same, carried out so as to give the brightest boy in the school not a moment to think of anything else, will be not only interesting, but profitable to all.

It is a mistake to allow

**Disorder.**—Why are not more of our Bible schools conducted in accordance with the apostolic command, "Let all things be done decently and in order"? The preceding paragraph suggests the reason. A disorderly superintendent makes a disorderly school. A quiet, self-possessed leader, who knows just what he is going to do, and *when* and *how* it should be done, will have an orderly school during the opening and the closing exercises. It is absurd to talk about disciplining the Bible school. If the superintendent disciplines himself and secures the coöperation of the officers and teachers of the school, it will not be difficult to manage the so-called "bad boy" and the restless or the indifferent girl.

It is a mistake not

To protect the school from the thoughtlessness of its officers.—The teacher has just gotten the pupils interested in the lesson when the secretary invades the class. Several precious moments are lost and the broken threads of thought are just reunited when Mr. Librarian appears on his important mission. The class has had just about time enough to recover from the effects of his visit, when the pictures or the cards or something else is distributed, and soon the teacher is glad to close a half hour of instruction, a large part of which has been wasted by needless interruptions. But these things cannot be avoided. Beg your pardon. The remedy is very simple. Have a time either before or after the lesson study when all necessary work other than teaching shall be attended to. Then allow no interruptions from those outside during the time given for lesson study, except in case of imperative necessity. In the best-managed schools, the work of the various officers is attended to before the opening of the school session, and all distributions are made after the benediction has been pronounced. This is the ideal plan.

It is a mistake not

To make the last ten minutes the most profitable ones of the school session.—The lack of a well-arranged order of exercises with life behind it is largely responsible for this failure. The review, however, is the rock on which so many schools go to pieces during the moments of closing. Some superintendents talk because they do not know how to ask questions. The remedy is simple: The superintendent must learn to ask questions, or else give the review in charge of one who can ask questions.

What reason is there—aside from tradition, which is not reason—for the superintendent's always conducting the review? If nothing better can be done, a few simple, leading questions on the lesson text may be assigned at the opening of the school. These should constitute the basis of the review. The answers to them will suggest other questions.

Again, some misnamed reviews are failures because the superintendents who conduct them resort to that barbarous practice of asking questions in order to expose the ignorance of those questioned. Perhaps this is done because the questioner has no conception of the knowledge of the pupils. Perhaps he has an idea that he is showing how "smart" he is. At any rate he does not get answers. Why should he? Who likes to have their ignorance exposed? A "review" is a looking again at the lesson. Every question should be for the purpose of drawing out what the pupil has received, or for the purpose of stimulating thought. Questions asked in this spirit will receive answers.

Sometimes teachers hurt the school.—Next to the superintendent the teachers have most to do with making or marring the school. While it is the superintendent's duty to be orderly and to set a good example, his efforts may be nullified by the carelessness of his teachers, who should never forget that it hurts the school for them to neglect to coöperate with him.

It is a mistake

To fail to be in the class before the opening of the school session.—To be near the building or in the building is not sufficient. The teacher who allows the pupils

to get to the class before her has given them an advantage which she may not be able to overcome during the entire session. The few minutes of teaching by some witty or mischievous leader of the class may be so powerful that the teacher in vain tries to interest those whose attention she might have gained and held had she been in the class before the other teacher began his work. There would be fewer tardy pupils were they certain to find their teacher always punctually in her place.

It is a mistake

To fail to set a good example.—Stronger than spoken words is the silent influence of the teacher's example. A teacher that is attentive, alert, and responsive to what is going on on the platform is doing far more for the general good order of the school than is the teacher who is always telling his pupils what they should do. A reverent teacher helps to inspire reverence. The one who sings, takes part in the responsive exercises, and tries to answer the questions put to the school is doing far more to have his pupils do the same than could be accomplished by any amount of exhortation or of scolding.

It is a mistake

To attempt to teach too much during the lesson session.—The failure to have clearly in mind one principal truth to be impressed during the study time results in confusion of thought on the part of the teacher and to indifference or disorder on the part of the pupil. One truth well taught on each Sunday is infinitely better than the attempt to teach fifty-two things during one lesson. The teacher who selects the truth most



needed in the every-day life of his pupils, allows that truth to master him, and then, after earnest prayer, comes to the class prepared to state it, question on it, illustrate it, and impress it, will have little trouble with inattentive pupils. One truth at a time, teacher, one truth at a time!

It is a mistake to find

**Indiscriminate fault with your school.**—Sometimes it is the pastor who is the culprit. Sometimes the superintendent is the guilty one. Sometimes the teacher is to blame. When all three are faultfinders, and they are helped by some of the officers, there is absolutely no hope for the school. The cure for faultfinding is found in public commendation of what is good. There should be more incentives to well-doing with more rewards therefor, and less talk about evil-doing or neglect to do. At present there is too much attention paid to those who come short of what is right, and too little notice taken of those who strive to do their best. This should be reversed.

It is an inexcusable mistake for a Bible-school worker to be provoked when his mistakes are pointed out.—Yet this is by no means rare even on the part of those who pray for light and wisdom. A minister withdrew from an association of Bible-school workers when its committee, appointed for the purpose, ventured to point out some of the mistakes that were hurting his school. Foolish man! Yes, indeed, but there are others like him. A superintendent, when his official shortcomings are pointed out to him, threatens to resign. A small man! Let us be bigger and not allow our feelings to

stand in the way of the very best work for the Master who spared not himself.

The place in which to guard against these mistakes is in the teachers' meeting.—But we have no teachers' meeting. That is the most harmful mistake of all. Is it any wonder that your workers make so many mistakes that hurt your school? If you cannot have a weekly teachers' meeting you can at least have a monthly gathering of your workers, at which those things which are hurting your school may be discussed, and measures taken to prevent them.

## CHAPTER III

### SUPERINTENDENTS' QUESTIONS

THIS chapter deals with answers to various questions that came in from superintendents in New York City at a convention. I sent out one hundred return postal cards to as many city superintendents, asking them to propound some live question for discussion at the conference for superintendents that was to be held. The following are some of the questions that came in, and to them I venture the subjoined replies.

**Question.**—"When a monthly teachers' meeting is all that is practicable, what subjects would you have discussed with a competent corps of teachers?"

**Answer.**—In the first place, I doubt whether a monthly teachers' meeting is "all that is practicable." "Where there is a will there is a way." If the pastor and superintendent are on fire for a teachers' meeting each week, they can have one. Of course not all the teachers will come. But if half or one-quarter come, they will both get much good themselves, and do much good to the school. I never would consent to manage a Sunday-school without a weekly teachers' meeting. I have always had this in my school, and always propose to have it. It is only a question of HOW MUCH YOU WANT IT.

But if you do not have more than a monthly teachers'

meeting, I would recommend as the first question, "How to establish a weekly meeting." This if rightly discussed and prayed over will, nine times out of ten, solve the difficulty, and then you will have time enough at your disposal for the proper discussion of all questions vital to the welfare of your Sunday-school.

**Question.**—How best bring and keep in the Sunday-school young men and women sixteen years of age and over ?

**Answer.**—This is an important question. In the first place, do all in your power to keep hold of those *who are at present* in your school who are under sixteen. If you do this, the question will be largely answered. That school that keeps those it has now, will soon have adult classes in abundance. To do this, however, we must have good teachers, and must provide for the proper handling of the scholars as they grow older. One most helpful adjunct in this is to have class rooms for the older members of the school. It is relatively easy to keep them if they are thus provided for. But even then they will not stay unless they have the proper kind of teaching. Here is just where the matter of the teachers' meeting is of such vital importance.

In the next place, cease addressing the school as "Children." Let the presence of the older scholars be borne in mind, and speak to the school in accordance with this fact.

If you succeed in keeping your younger scholars until they are over sixteen years of age, they themselves will bring in others, and in this way your school will grow.

Many schools have now learned to organize their

older classes, and they have found that with a class organization, they succeed not only in holding the scholars, but they constantly draw in new ones. If you want further information on this point write to Rev. Grant L. Bice, 44 State Street, Albany, N. Y., State Sunday-school Secretary, and ask for literature on the matter of organized Bible Class Work.

**Question.**—What single thing, apart from work done in the Sunday-school, will aid most in holding the interest of the scholars in the school?

**Answer.**—Visiting by the teacher. Nothing can take the place of this. If the teacher visits her class with some measure of regularity, and especially if she visits the absentees, and those who are sick, she is almost sure to have a good class attendance. If you do not believe this, try it, and you will find out the truth of what has been said. In addition to visiting, letters are a great help. Make use of the post-office. Scholars love to receive letters. If you are off on your vacation, all the more do they appreciate a letter, telling them what you are doing, and perhaps enclosing some little picture or pressed flower. If you never have tried this, make the attempt, and you will be much pleased to find out how well it works.

Where this is possible, little class sociables at the home of the teacher are most effective. They need not be expensive affairs. A glass of lemonade, and some cake and a few simple games are not so hard to provide.

**Question.**—What, in your judgment, is the best means to secure a prompt attendance; that is, every member present at the time of the opening signal?

**Answer.**—This is a thing not to be accomplished in a day. Begin with your teachers. If they are all present on time (that really means at least ten minutes ahead of time) it will be a good step in the right direction. Then let the teacher put forth all her influence to have at least her own class all there on time.

In our school we have large cards at all of the doors, on one side of which the words "I am early" are printed. On the other side are the words "I am late." The "early" side is exposed until the moment that the piano strikes the chord. Then doors are closed and the card is reversed, so that all who come late read, "I am late." The doors are not opened for a few minutes, during which time late comers have a text to study which reminds them that they are tardy. When our doors are opened, we do not sing, or do anything but sit in perfect silence until each late comer has taken his seat. This helps to shame them at the thought of their tardiness. In an average attendance of, say, 525 in the school, we average about twenty-two late each Sunday. How much do you average?

**Question.**—How can we secure study at home on the part of the scholar?

**Answer.**—In these days when our public schools are pressing their scholars so hard, this is a difficult matter to accomplish. Yet something may still be done if we are willing to take *sufficient trouble* in the matter. In the first place, if you will assign some simple task for each scholar, one week in advance, you will find that some of your class will respond. Not all. No, that is too much to expect. But "some" is better than "none," is it not?

Then it will help to visit the parents and talk the matter over with the mother. If her aid can be enlisted in this matter it will help greatly. Perhaps you may find some older brother or sister who will come to your aid. Certainly this is well worth the effort. Of course, if you are too lazy to try, you must not be surprised if your class is too lazy to study.

**Question.**—What is the best way to get scholars interested in the school and impress on them the importance of the work?

**Answer.**—Here we have really two questions rolled into one. Take the first. The best way to get scholars interested in the school is to make it interesting. If you begin in a dull way, and sing at half speed, and drawl out a prayer in such a feeble voice that no one can hear, how can you expect scholars to be interested? Young people are quick. To meet their natures we must be quick too. Lively music, prompt responsive readings, short, earnest prayer, varied devotional exercises, these are things that all young folk love. From the time that the superintendent takes charge of the school, to the last hymn, all should be crisp and lively. To make it so requires a good deal of preparation. Now take the second question. You never can make the scholars rightly appreciate the "importance" of the school. You did not when you were young, and why should you expect them to? Make it good and helpful, and when they grow as old as you are they will understand its value. But not before.

**Question.**—How to secure teachers for our Sunday-schools? Should an endeavor be made to pay teachers?

**Answer.**—To the last of these two questions, I will reply in another chapter at length. Take up the first question. It is a most important one. It is a question that is asked from Maine to Oregon. If it were a question of getting a sufficient number of teachers *once for all*, the matter would be simple. But teachers change so often that the school that has all it needs to-day, is running short a year from to-day. In my school I lose one-quarter of my teachers each year. Perhaps the quickest way to answer this question, then, is to tell how I do this work. In the first place, I make it as easy as possible for my teachers to do their work. In this way some, who otherwise might become discouraged, and leave, stay. In the next place, I am always on the watch for new teachers. In the Bible classes there are young men and women growing up who give promise of being good teachers. These we try to enlist, and we succeed in doing this very often. Though they are inexperienced, they make good teachers, and their hearts are in the work, if for no other reason than because they love the school already. Then we watch the membership of the church, and when we need a teacher we look over the church roll, and if we find the name of some one who we think will be suitable, we ask that person to volunteer. It is of little use to give out the notice from the pulpit, "Teachers are urgently wanted in the Sunday-school." No one pays any attention to such a notice, for what is everybody's business is nobody's business. No, go for them individually, and you are much more likely to get them. Does this mean work? Yes, and hard and constant work. But why did you take the



superintendency if you did not mean to work? Will this plan be successful? Well, it has been successful in my school for over thirty years. Then why not in yours?

**Question.**—How can we get teachers to attend teachers' meeting?

**Answer.**—In the first place, you never will get them all there, unless you have ice cream and cake. Then they will come out in force. But that should not discourage you. If you get half, be encouraged and grateful. But the meeting must be made truly helpful to them in their work, or you cannot expect to get even half. Nor must the teachers' meeting be merely a place for the exposition of the lesson. It must be a place for mutual sympathy, for the stating of difficulties and the proposal of remedies. It should be a warm-hearted meeting, where the teachers learn to bear each other's burdens. Of course everything depends on the leader. He (or she) must be fit to lead. At times the superintendent may well get some public school-teacher to lead, for as a rule they are more competent to do this than many superintendents are. If the pastor is apt at work of this kind, why not have him lead? It would do him good as well as do the teachers good.

At times it may be well to have a teachers' sociable, and thus get them out in full force. But this is not possible often.

**Question.**—How can we impress teachers with the importance of their position, their duties and responsibilities as molders of the spiritual life of their scholars?

**Answer.**—This is a matter of slow growth. It would help if the pastor were enlisted in this effort, and were

to preach from the pulpit on "The Sunday-school Teacher and his Responsibility." Much can be done in the teachers' meeting in this direction, and the teachers there can be patiently led to see their duty, and be led to pray for wisdom in its right discharge. On the whole, if the "tone" of the school is high the teachers will feel it, and if the service of worship (too often called "opening exercises") is made warm and reverent, this, too, will help raise the standard of the teacher's conception, and his effort to do his duty toward his class.

**Question.**—How can we interest the rank and file of the adult members of a congregation in Sunday-school work?

**Answer.**—If by this is meant how can we get them to join the school, the reply would be that probably it cannot be done. The rank and file of adults in any congregation are too old to be induced to change the habit of years, and come to Sunday-school. The church has rarely existed where even twenty-five per cent. of the adult members could be induced to come to the school session.

But still much can be done by means of the Home Department of the school. By means of this department, many who could not come to Sunday-school if they would, and who would not if they could, may still be prevailed upon to pledge themselves to study the Sunday-school lesson for half an hour each week. This has been done in thousands of cases, and in the State of New York alone we have over forty thousand Home Department scholars. An additional advantage of this way of working is found in the fact that if a mother is studying

the same lesson as her children, she is more apt to help them in their study of the lesson.

**Question.**—Is it best to consider the superintendency a layman's office?

**Answer.**—Yes, as a rule. But there are exceptions to this. In the large city Sunday-schools it is sometimes found best to have the pastor's assistant take charge of the school. In Episcopal Sunday-schools this is very frequently done, and the school has in this way an ordained man for superintendent.

There are quite a number of Sunday-schools in the land where it is almost impossible to find a capable layman to take the office of superintendent. In such cases let the pastor assume the office and do the work. Three services are not too much for any well man to undertake. The writer did this in his own school for fourteen years, and it did him only good and no harm.

**Question.**—How can the superintendent know what his teachers are teaching?

**Answer.**—One way in which the writer knows what his teachers are teaching is by first teaching them what to teach. This is done in the regular weekly teachers' meeting. Then he knows also by means of regular written examinations that are held three times each year. He also gets some information along this line by teaching frequently in his school as substitute, when he can easily find out how much the class that he takes has had done for it by the regular teacher.

**Question.**—Would it be advisable to have the public school authorities set aside one afternoon in the week whereon such children could be excused from attend-

ance as their parents certified would attend a mid-week Sunday-school session in addition to the regular session on Sunday ?

Answer.—No, I hardly think so. Either the public school session on that afternoon would have to be entirely omitted, or it should not be omitted at all. If it were not omitted then those scholars who did attend it would have by just that much the advantage over those who stayed away to attend a mid-week Sunday-school session. You could not expect scholars, particularly those who were ambitious, to make any such sacrifice for the sake of the Bible instruction. My own impression is that all schemes to omit or change our public school instruction for the sake of Bible teaching are vain.

Question.—How can we maintain order in the school ?

Answer.—In the first place, you must get order, or you cannot maintain it. In small Sunday-schools this is not hard. But in large schools it requires some system. In the first place, it cannot be done at all unless the teachers coöperate with the superintendent. If, when he gives the signal for order, whether by bell or by chord from the piano, they keep on talking, or transacting class business, he will find it impossible to get order. If the secretary or the librarian walk around the room after the signal for order is given, distributing books or records, how can order be secured ? No, let superintendent and fellow workers of all grades agree that the instant that the signal for order is given they themselves will at once obey. Then let each teacher do his best to secure order in his own class. Of course the doors must be closed as soon as the "order signal"

is given, or the late comers will make disorder as they come in.

After the signal for order has been given, let the superintendent rise quietly and stand before the school. Let him make no further appeal for order, but *just stand*, until the school becomes perfectly quiet. It may take a minute or more at first to secure this perfect attention, but soon the school will become accustomed to the plan, and it will not take ten seconds to have it quiet. Then give out your hymn, and begin your worship.

**Question.**—Name some of the pitfalls to be avoided by the superintendent.

**Answer.**—These are legion. Let me enumerate some of them. 1. Coming late. By late I mean five or ten minutes before the time for opening. The superintendent should be in his school long, yes, long before the opening time. (This is not the case, however, where the school meets right after the preaching service.) 2. Coming unprepared. I have seen a superintendent who had not picked out his hymns step to the platform at the time of opening, and then begin to consult his music leader as to what to sing. The superintendent should know beforehand *all* that he proposes to do, from start to finish, before ever he gets to the school. 3. Failing to be cordial to his teachers. It would be a good thing for the superintendent to try to shake hands with each of his teachers before the school opens. Of course he must be early in order to do this. 4. Leading the school in a sort of half-hearted way. A leader should lead, and that in a whole-hearted way, full of enthusiasm. Put a

half-dead man as leader, and what can you expect to have but a half-dead school? If this question meets the eyes of any superintendent, let me advise him by all means to get a good book on the work of the Sunday-school like that of Marion Lawrance or Amos R. Wells and study it, and then carry out its suggestions. It will do him and the school much good.

**Question.**—Should the pastor or superintendent preside at the business meetings of the Sunday-school?

**Answer.**—As a rule the superintendent should preside. But rather than have any friction, let the pastor preside. If the pastor is really active in the school, there is all the more reason for letting him take the chair. But if he is a reasonable man, he will insist on the superintendent taking charge of the business meeting.

**Question.**—Is it not better for a teacher to enforce strict discipline even to the extent of expulsion from the class if necessary?

**Answer.**—Expulsion is rarely necessary. If the teacher has tact and perseverance, discipline may be secured, in time, if not immediately. Each case must be judged by itself, for no two cases are just alike. With a child who comes from a demoralized home, more patience is called for than with a child from a good home. Often when the child is insubordinate, a visit by the teacher on the mother is sufficient to remedy the difficulty. In some cases it is enough for the teacher to call in the aid of the superintendent, for whom presumably the child has some extra respect. Sometimes the expulsion of the scholar for that session in which he misbehaves is adequate. But if all fail, then, rather than have the whole

class demoralized, let the scholar be expelled. In many years' experience it has been necessary in my school to expel only two, and in each case they apologized and came back in the course of a month or two.

**Question.**—How far are prizes legitimate at all, either for attendance, lesson, or other accomplishment?

**Answer.**—My best reply to this would naturally be to tell what we do in our own school, for we have discussed this matter at great length in past years. We offer a prize to each scholar in the whole school, and to each teacher and officer, who attains a certain grade of attendance, combined with promptness and a certain per cent. of perfect answers to three examinations of the lessons of three quarters. All fare alike in this matter, and all must do high-grade work to win the prize offered.

## CHAPTER IV

### FICTION OR FACT?

Fiction that might be fact is my theme. The Mount Pleasant Sunday-school was on its annual picnic. For many weeks the scholars had been anticipating this occasion, and had made all manner of preparations for the same. A fine steamer had been chartered, and the grove that the school was to visit was on Long Island Sound, and was charmingly situated. As the scholars gathered on the pier, their bright faces showed that all had high anticipations of a grand good time. Lunch baskets were much in evidence, and bats and balls were not missing. The musicians, too, were there, to discourse sweet music on the boat and at the grove. Many of the scholars too had invited friends to go with them, as the annual picnic of the Mount Pleasant Sunday-school had become famous for the good times that the people had.

At last the whistle sounded, as the signal for departure, and the band began "The Star Spangled Banner," while the whole school united in one grand hurrah, and waved their hands to those who had to go back to their work for the day, and who somewhat sadly returned the greeting. The run down the East River was much enlivened by the many sights of passing steamers and schooners, and craft of all kinds, while the shores were



most attractive with their lawns, and abundant trees, all in the glory of summer foliage. Then came the broader expanse of the Sound, and the feeling of wide-ness that the dweller in the crowded city rarely enjoys. All went merry as a marriage bell, and each heart was filled with joy over the exhilarating sights and sounds that all so highly appreciated.

In about two hours the grove was reached, and all rushed ashore, to enjoy themselves for the next six or eight hours, each in his own way. The parents sought out quiet groves where they could camp down, and enjoy themselves in a peaceful way, while the younger set at once began to organize their games of various kinds. Baseball, races of all kinds were at once started, and the young folks had a most delectable time, only stopping their games at the hour for lunch. This was enjoyed in various family groups, and all did their duty by the viands that the careful mother of each family had brought along.

Lunch done, the games were resumed, until, alas, only too soon the whistle again sounded for "all aboard." Lunch baskets were once more packed (though they were not as full as they had been in the morning) and before long all were safe on the steamer, setting their faces homeward. Tired were they all, but happy and satisfied with their splendid day's outing.

At the bows of the steamer a set of young folks now gathered to have a little chat. There were among them representatives of several Sunday-schools. Presently their talk turned toward their respective Sunday-schools, and then it became most interesting. As the writer was

sitting near this group, he could not help overhearing what they said, though of course he did not take any part in the conversation.

"What kind of a teacher have you got?" asked one of the girls, addressing a friend from another school.

"Oh, I don't just know. One thing I know, however, and that is that she is nearly always late. At the best she just skins in at the last moment, so that we are never quite sure whether we shall have our own teacher, or a substitute. The girls are tired of the whole thing, and lately some of them have begun to stay away just on that account. It is too bad."

"Is that so?" was the reply; "why our teacher is there always, and what is more, is early, so that she is the first in the class to be in the school. In this way we know what to expect, and are glad to be early ourselves, so as to greet her, and have a few words with her before the school opens. We all like that, and are rarely late ourselves, as that makes us ashamed."

At this point a boy broke in saying, "Our teacher is not late, but very often does not come at all. He never sends the superintendent any excuse, so that we do not know whether to expect him or not. We do get good substitutes when he is away, but after all, no substitute can take the place of the regular teacher. Substitutes do not know our ways, and so get mixed up in the management of the class. Of course, the boys do not like this at all."

"Well," said another boy, "if that was the kind of a teacher I had, I would light out and find another school. I am sure I do not know why I should break my neck

to go to a Sunday-school, if the teacher does not think enough of his boys to be there regularly."

"Now let me tell you about our teacher," said a maiden of fifteen summers. "She is regular in her attendance, but she always asks us questions out of the quarterly, in regular order. It is dull as dust to have that kind of teaching. In the public school they would not allow a teacher to work in that way. They have to know what they are about, or they would be bounced. I really do not think that our teacher studies her lesson carefully, or she would know better than that. Indeed I hear that she never attends the teachers' meeting for the study of the lesson. She ought to do that, for in that way she would be able to do better work for us in the class. Somehow or other she never makes the lesson bright and attractive."

"I am sorry for you," replied another girl of about the same age; "our teacher knows what she is after. For she never uses her quarterly at all, while she is teaching. She knows too much, and I am sure that she must prepare well before she comes to the class. The fact is that she is so full of the lesson that we find the time too short for all we have to talk over. We are always sorry when the closing signal comes."

"Well," said another young girl, "when it comes to the matter of the regularity of the teacher, I really think that ours is the banner class. Why, our teacher has taught the class now for twenty-nine years, and do you know she has been absent only FOUR TIMES. Just think of that. And the times when she has been absent, she absolutely could not help it. I think that is grand."

"Yes," replied another scholar, "that is wonderful, and I wonder how ever she did it. Our teacher is not quite as regular as that, but she is grand all the same. One thing that we like about her is that she visits us in our homes quite regularly. And not only that, she drops in for a moment at our places of business. For example, I am in Huyler's, and the other day she came in just as we were very busy. But she did not stay long. She only gave me a rose and said, 'This with my love.' Of course I was much pleased at her thoughtfulness. Any one would be pleased."

"Our teacher is just like that too," said a young lad. "He visits us and is especially careful to do so when any member of the class is sick. Last month when my brother Sam was so sick, our teacher came quite often to see him, and sometimes brought him some delicacy or other which you may be sure was much appreciated by us all. Mother thinks that there is no man in town like him."

"Then he takes his class out for a day in the country once in a while in the summer, and we all enjoy that immensely. He is most companionable, and does not set himself up in any way. I tell you, the boys think that he is the finest teacher in the whole school."

"Talking about the country," said another scholar, "do you know in the summer when our teacher is away, she never fails to write to each member of the class, and tells them where she is, and how she is spending her time. Then she puts a pressed flower or an autumn leaf into the letter, just as a souvenir that we may keep. Each girl reads her letter for the week to the whole class, for they are most interesting."

On this a silent member of the group broke in as follows: "Really I never knew that there were so many different kinds of Sunday-school teachers. But mine is not like any of those of whom you all have been speaking. Our teacher gets through the lesson in about fifteen minutes, and then does not seem to know what to do with the rest of the time. Then she promises us that she will do certain things for us, but she always forgets to carry out her promises. We have learned that we cannot trust her word at all, so we pay no more attention to what she says. Some of the girls think that all this carelessness comes from the fact that she has a young man who dances attendance on her, and she has no time to think of anything else. I have only lately come into the class, but the older girls say that she was not always so, but did much better until this young man began to hang around her. I wonder if this is really so. Anyhow, I have been thinking lately that if things did not go better I should leave the class and try my luck in another Sunday-school."

Just at this point a boy spoke up and said, "Say, we have been talking a good deal about our teachers. Now suppose that we find out what kind of superintendents we have. If no one objects, I will set the ball rolling in that direction. I am sorry to say that our superintendent is a stick. He makes me tired. When he goes onto the platform it is evident that he is not prepared for his work, for not infrequently I see him picking out his hymns after the school has been opened. That does not seem right. Then when he prays he speaks so low that we can hardly hear him, and his prayers are awfully long

and dull. It makes us all wish that he had more common sense."

"We have a different kind of a man as superintendent in our school," said another boy. "He is a great fault-finder, and is always having a dig at us boys. If anything goes wrong he never takes the trouble to find out who did it, but blames it on the boys at once. This makes us mad, I can tell you, for half the time the girls are as much to blame as the boys. But he seems to think that the girls are all angels. In that way he gets left. Then, though there are not singing-books enough to go round, and the girls have most of them, he finds fault with the boys for not singing; as though one could sing without a book. Why does he not see to it that we have books before he blames us for not singing?"

"Now that you have mentioned the matter of singing," said a girl, "the trouble in our school is that we have not had a new music book for I do not know how many years. Our books are all broken-backed, and we have sung them to death. I do wish that our superintendent would try and get a new supply of singing-books, and then we would try our best to sing well. In a Sunday-school two blocks away from us, I hear that they have three sets of books, and sing out of one for two or three months, and then take up another set. This gives freshness to their singing. They claim to sing better than any school in the city, and I should not wonder if they were right. Certainly our school sings most shamefully. Then besides all this our piano is something to hear. It sounds as though it had come out of the ark, it is so

stringy and metallic in its tone. And half of the time it is out of tune. I think it is a shame to have things go on in this kind of a way in our city."

"You ought to see our superintendent," said another lad, "for he is a regular back number. If any visitor comes to the school, he at once asks him to 'make a few remarks.' And the kind of stuff that we sometimes hear is awful. Then when the superintendent comes to talk himself he always addresses us as 'dear children.' The boys all kick at that, for they feel that they are not children any more. As for reviewing the school on the lesson for the day, or making use of the blackboard as they do in all of the public schools, he never would dream of that. In fact, we have no board in our school at all, and if we had, there is no one who could use it. Our superintendent does sometimes address the school, but he gets off such 'chestnuts' that the boys whisper, 'Oh, cut it out.' He has not told us a new story or given a fresh illustration for many a long year. They say he is a good man; but I am sure that he does not interest us at all. He never thought of having a teachers' meeting like the school at Progressville, where they say things are worked up to date."

"I am sorry for you all who have such superintendents," said a bright lad. "We have a very different kind of a man at the head of our school. He knows what is what. His blackboard reviews are something to remember, for he helps make the lesson clear; and when we have a substitute teacher who has fallen on his back, the superintendent makes up for it wonderfully. He does good work on the board too, and in that way helps

to fix the main parts of the lesson and its teachings in our minds firmly.

"Besides this, he knows us all by name, and that helps a lot. Then he visits us in our homes, especially in times of sickness. He has a list of our birthdays, and sends us each a letter of congratulation on that day. It makes you feel good to know that you are remembered in this way.

"In our school we have a good physical culture class, and the superintendent comes to see us drill, and seems to enjoy it about as much as we do ourselves. The boys just love him, and would do anything in the world for him."

In this way the talk went on in that group of Sunday-school scholars, not in any bitter way, but still in a manner that would have made some of the teachers and superintendents think deeply if they had heard all the conversation. It was all true, and that was the sad part of much that the young folks said. If you had the privilege of hearing your class discuss you, teacher, what do you think would be your feeling over what they could truthfully say about you?

Shortly before the time of arrival at the dock, one scholar broached a new phase of this "school of criticism."

"I wish," she said, "that we had a different kind of a minister. Our pastor rarely comes to the Sunday-school, or if he comes in at all, it is just for a flying visit. He does not seem to know what lesson the school has been having, and if the superintendent asks him to say anything he never speaks of that which we have just been studying. Our teachers have a teachers' meeting, but



he never goes to it, though I hear that he finds time to attend two different ministers' clubs each week. And then there are his sermons. I never understand anything that he says, for he seems to talk of things that are so far away. He reads all his sermons, and that makes it all the more dull. I love to sing, but in our church the choir does most of the singing, and the way they 'go it' is fearful. So to me the church service is deadly dull, and I wish that I was not obliged to attend."

"When I hear what you say," said another girl, "I am glad that I do not go to your church. As for our minister, all the young folks just adore him. He acts as though he were one of them. Every Sunday he preaches a short sermon to the younger members of the congregation, and we all love to hear him. The youngest can understand, and yet he does not talk in any 'goody-goody' way, as some men do. Sometimes he uses objects to illustrate his sermon, and that makes it all the easier to remember what he says. Even father and mother seem to remember the object sermons better than they do the usual ones, and they talk about them when they get home more than they do about the ordinary sermon. Then in the school he knows just what to say to fit the lesson for the day, so that the scholars seem to feel that he knows what he is talking about. We just love him, and are so afraid that some other church will call him away from us. But I do not believe that he would be willing to go."

Just at this point the steamer was drawing near the dock, so the conversation had to come to an end. The

scholars scattered swiftly to their homes, only to go on the following Sunday to meet just these same teachers and superintendents. Are you, teacher, one of these ? And if so, *which one are you ?*

## CHAPTER V

### THE FOUR PERSONAL FACTORS IN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SUCCESS

*By Jesse Lyman Hurlbut, D. D.*

Many years ago I heard that master-workman in the Sunday-school, Ralph Wells, give an illustration which since then has often been in my mind. He said, "On my way up the hill to this convention, I saw a horse pulling a loaded wagon. The wagon was not large, and the horse was strong; but he was having a hard time with his load, because he was trying to do his work *on three legs* instead of four. He had met with an injury, and one of his legs was useless. The load, which would not have been heavy for a horse with four legs, was a terrible burden to a three-legged animal. That horse made me think of the Sunday-school, which goes ahead or stands still on four legs. Two of the legs of the Sunday-school horse are in front. They are the *teacher* and the *superintendent*. Two others are behind, pushing from the rear, but just as important as those in front, the *pastor* and the *parent*. If all four of the legs will do their part, the Sunday-school will move on and carry quite a load. But if any one of these four factors fail, then the work of the school is held back from success, and may be turned into failure."

That was the thought, if not the language, of a para-

graph in an address that I heard twenty years ago. It is worth putting into print, and it suggests its own application to every thoughtful reader.

Let us consider what the word "success" means when applied to the Sunday-school. The successful Sunday-school,—what is it? It is not the school with the largest enrolment, or the finest building, or the best music, or the most elaborate program of exercises, or the school which makes the greatest stir in the community. Success in the Sunday-school means souls saved through the school as an institution. "Saved," not "converted"; for salvation is more than conversion. Conversion is the decision of a soul for Christ, the turning from sin to righteousness, from self to God. That is the beginning of salvation, and a very important step, but only one step. Salvation includes conversion; but it includes also training, progress, completeness in Christian character. The mission of the Sunday-school is to bring souls to Christ, and to build up souls in Christ; and not until they have been brought and built up to completeness of Christian character is the work of the Sunday-school finished for its members. The stress of work in the Sunday-school is laid upon the teaching of the Word of Life, simply because that Word will accomplish more in the salvation of the scholar than will any other instrumentality. But we are never to lose sight of the great ultimate aim for which all our work is wrought, the complete salvation of the scholar. We store up the contents of Scripture in the pupil's mind, only that through feeding upon the Word, he may become strong in Jesus Christ.

In the accomplishment of this purpose there are the four personal factors named in the homely illustration with which we began: the teacher, the superintendent, the pastor, and the parent.

### I. THE TEACHER

The teacher is the unit of Sunday-school work, "the man behind the gun," upon whom the work depends. He it is who, in the Sunday-school, comes most closely into contact with the pupil. The parent enters more directly into the life of the child at home; but we are speaking now of the Sunday-school; and there the teacher is the one who touches the pupil in the closest relation.

There are some teachers from whose classes pupils are entering the church constantly, until after a time the entire membership of the class is inscribed upon the roll of the church. These teachers may be Bible scholars, or they may not be; indeed, it often comes to pass that one who has no great skill in teaching does have great success in soul-winning. We must not undervalue one type, nor must we overvalue the other. Sometimes the teacher who is storing up in the minds and hearts of his pupils a mass of Scripture truth, is laying the foundation upon which another may build a strongly developed Christian character.

But let the teacher ever keep before him as his chief aim the salvation of his scholar. Let him teach every lesson with this aim in view, even though he may not say every Sunday, "Come to Jesus." Let him know the spiritual conditions and environment of every scholar, whether he is near to the kingdom or far from

it, what are his helps and what are his hindrances in the way of life: and let him work steadily, even though he may not let his purpose always be apparent to the subject of it, for the salvation of his scholar; always remembering that salvation is more than decision, more than the crisis of conversion, more than the formal act of union with the church; that it is completeness in Christ Jesus.

Senator Depew was once giving testimony before a committee of the New York Legislature, on the methods of signaling employed by the New York Central Railroad, for insuring the safety of its passengers. He gave a very elaborate account of the system in use, and then made a remark of this tenor: "After all, gentlemen, whatever may be the system in the last analysis, we must depend upon the men who work it; and there is always more in the man than there is in the system."

The man at the center of the system in the Sunday-school is the *teacher*; and oftener than otherwise, "the man" is a woman. But whether male or female, let the teacher recognize that the ultimate purpose of the Sunday-school is to bring to Christ as many souls as possible, fully prepared for the kingdom of God; and then to say, "Here am I, Lord, and those whom thou hast given me."

In order to bring to pass this result (1) Let the teacher himself be a saved man, showing forth the fruits of grace in his own character; that he may draw to Christ, and not repel his scholars from Christ: for what the teacher *is*, will always have a greater influence than what he says. (2) Let him know his scholars intimately,

and be at home with them, not only for an hour on Sunday, but through the week. (3) Let him find something in every lesson which will set forth the Christian life, and wisely, tactfully, impress it on his class. (4) Let him personally and individually urge upon his scholars, at proper times, the duty of an immediate consecration to God. (5) Let him watch over their developing character, and set before them large and noble ideals. (6) And let him by counsel, by suggestions, and even by warning, use every effort to build up in his pupils the complete Christian character.

## II. THE SUPERINTENDENT

Every ship must have a captain, every army a general, every business a head; and it is a truism to say that every Sunday-school must have a superintendent. Yet there are thousands of Sunday-schools in America which are practically, though not theoretically, worse off than one Sunday-school which I visited in England. There I was informed that each male teacher took his turn in directing the school for one Sunday; so that there was a new superintendent for ten weeks in succession; and they considered it a good plan! Now in America there are thousands of Sunday-schools whose fate is worse than that one in England; for while they have a superintendent by election, he is simply a figurehead, doing nothing except to announce hymns that the chorister has selected, and leaving the school to run itself according to its own will.

The true superintendent is the sagacious, alert, watchful master of affairs, with a purpose steadily in view;

with an eye that scans the horizon ; with a hand which is always gentle, though firm and strong ; with a resource always ready for every emergency ; and with a clear and high ideal ever above him, toward which he is ever pressing,—always a little beyond his reach, yet never so far beyond as to be visionary and utopian, far enough to be an inspiration, not so far as to become a discouragement. The work of the Sunday-school is the teaching of the Word ; and it is the superintendent's business to see that this work is done thoroughly ; to attend to it that his scholars know the spiritual contents of the Book. For the aim of the school is to make its scholars thoroughly acquainted with the Book, acquainted with Christ, who is the life of the Book ; and this aim should be before the superintendent day and night.

The whole school, teachers and scholars, takes its spirit from the superintendent. If the superintendent is "perfunctory," doing his work in a soulless, mechanical way, then the teachers are apt to do their work also in a soulless, mechanical way. But if the superintendent is a man who realizes the value of individual souls, who recognizes that the hour for reaching and winning them is the Sunday-school period of their lives, who is eager to bring his scholars to Christ and to build them up in Christ—then his teachers will catch the contagion of his enthusiasm and will be fellow workers with him in soul-winning and character-building.

With this end in view, what are the definite things to be done by the superintendent, the second of the four personal factors in the school's success ?



1. He as well as the teacher must show what the Christian character is, and present to the scholars of his school an object-lesson in his salvation which will attract them to Christ.

2. The superintendent in the main selects his own teachers. He finds them in the Sunday-school or the church, and sets them at work. Let him choose none but earnest, godly men and women to instruct the scholars; men and women clothed with an atmosphere of a Christly life and a winning personality.

3. Let him know all his teachers and his scholars as far as it is possible to know them. The superintendent should have his own roll of membership kept up to date, so that he can locate any given scholar by his class. He should come to the school, not five minutes late, not on the moment for opening, but half an hour before the opening, if practicable, to meet teachers and pupils in a social way and greet them as they enter.

4. Let him always hold up the life in Christ and the character of a Christian to view before his school, and with every lesson show something to point his school to Christ.

5. Let him make careful preparation for a great "Decision Day" in his school at least once each year. Let the date be fixed and kept before the teachers, but not named in advance to the school; let the teachers for several Sundays in advance meet weekly, before or after the session, to pray for their scholars together; let a wise presentation of the plan be made to the school on the day appointed; and "decision cards" be distributed, to be signed and returned by the scholars; and let the

fruits of the decision be carefully gathered, watched over, and brought into the church.

6. All these efforts will require tact and wisdom on the part of the superintendent. He must urge, but not urge too often nor too persistently. He must speak to his school, but in a sound, healthy way, not showing or promoting a morbid, unduly emotional type of the religious life, and yet "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." "He that winneth souls is wise," and he will need all his wisdom in winning them.

### III. THE PASTOR

It is often a marvel to me that so many pastors pay so little attention to the Sunday-school, the source from which at least three-fourths of the church of the future are to come. There are ministers who spend all their energies in preparing and preaching two sermons on Sunday, and have scarcely time or thought for any other work. But the minister's business is not to preach sermons; it is to win souls to Christ, and to build them up in Christ; and while the Sunday sermons may be a help in this direction, their value is often vastly overrated. When Paul wrote to Timothy, "preach the word," did he have in mind anything like the formal discourse of to-day? When Philip sitting in the chariot preached to the Ethiopian treasurer, he took a text, but did he deliver a sermon? The minister who knows how to preach sermons, and knows nothing else, in our time is finding himself and his church hopelessly stranded on the shore, with no prospect of getting into the current.

Then there is another type of minister who finds the

age unresponsive to his methods; and that is "the revivalist," the man who in former times drew crowds to emotionally evangelistic services; who was skilled in all the schemes of "the altar," "the mourner's bench," and "the inquiry room"; the man whose only method in soul-winning was that of the old-fashioned revival, once so successful everywhere, now successful only in a few places and under peculiar conditions; the method which dealt with men in masses, regarded them all as "sinners," and largely used the motive of "the terrors of the law" to lead them to Christ. The great failure of this method of working is, that "the sinners" will not come to the revival; and the saints who do not need either warning or pleading are the only people who hear them.

But if the saints do not need to be converted and the sinners will not come and be converted, what is the minister to do? What field can he work if these fields once so fruitful are now barren? There is the great and glorious field of the childhood in the Sunday-school, responsive to effort and rewarding it an hundredfold. There are ministers vainly endeavoring to hold revival meetings with none but church-members attending them, in whose Sunday-schools are gathered every week hundreds of children and young people ready to receive the Word of Life and to respond to it. The minister who will give to this field a portion of the energy and thought that some ministers are vainly giving to sermonizing, and other ministers are vainly giving to "revivalizing," will find speedy and large results of his labor.

But he must unlearn some of his former ways of work-

ing, if he is to reach and influence this hopeful constituency. He must lay aside alike his sermonic and revivalistic methods in dealing with the Sunday-school. "Repentance," "conversion," "the new birth," have meanings with this class different from the meaning that they have and should have to men who have lived godless and wicked lives. Here are a few hints to the pastor who would enter upon this field of labor.

1. Let him make himself at home in his Sunday-school—not by shaking hands with teachers and scholars during the lesson-period, but—by taking part every Sunday in its exercises, occasionally leading in prayer, often summing up the lesson in a five-minute talk, and speaking to the school on matters of interest religiously.

2. Let him before every communion-season, or before such times as members are received upon confession of faith, extend an invitation to the young people (above the primary age) in the Sunday-school.

3. Let him hold a "Children's Hour" through the week, bringing himself into personal contact with the boys and girls, and setting before them the Christian life and character.

4. Let him become acquainted with the children in the homes of his congregation, talk with them, and with their parents about their personal salvation.

5. The pastor and the superintendent together should plan and carry out the "Decision Day" service, and it should be the pastor's part to invite the scholars to a decision for Christ.

6. When names have been obtained on decision cards, or by any other plan, the pastor should organize those

who have pledged themselves to Christ's service into a class for training. With adults, the act of decision, involving repentance and consecration, is the important event in a soul's salvation; but with boys and girls, the decision is more easily reached, and the after-training is the all-important process. There may be in the congregation some person who can conduct this "training class for young Christians" better than the pastor; but, as a rule, the pastor can find no better use for an hour during the week than in this class. It may be made one section in "The Boys' and Girls' Hour," named in the third of these suggestions.

7. Whatever the methods the pastor may employ in reaching souls, let him avoid all technical and theological terms, speak in plain, simple language, talk heartily and genially, and *never too long*. This caution is needed, because a minister whose principal work must be that of preaching discourses of a certain length, is in great danger of speaking at the same length under other circumstances, when brevity is one of the conditions of success.

#### IV. THE PARENT

After all, the key to the situation lies not in the class with the teacher, nor on the platform with the superintendent, nor in the pulpit with the preacher, but in the home, that throne of power, with the parent. There are two members in this factor, but they are one, and we deal with them as the unit.

1. Parents should bring up their children from earliest years, not with the idea that they are at some future time, when of ripe age, to give themselves to God, but

that they belong to God as his children from the beginning. Every mother who teaches her child to say "Our Father, who art in heaven," teaches this truth; let her not unteach it by giving any teaching contrary to it.

2. The home should be the nucleus of a church in its character and influence, a house of prayer, of song, of religious service, of daily righteousness in life, of examples which should show the child what the Christian life is, and draw him toward it.

3. The parent should be quick to foster the earliest religious life of the child by all wise methods; to aid the teacher by teaching and enforcing the lesson at home; to tell Bible stories to the child; to make it familiar with the history and biography of the Bible, adapted to the growing nature of the child.

4. The parent should rejoice if the child, at any time after an age of eight or nine years, desires to unite with the church; should not interpose obstacles but remove them, and lead the child into the church.

5. The parent should especially nurture the young disciples who have united with the church; not criticising them, but encouraging them; not expecting all at once maturity of Christian character, but training them for it, and aiding in every possible way a symmetrical growth in grace.

6. There are some things that parents *should not do* if they wish their children to grow up in the church; and the most important is not to speak reproachfully or critically of the church, its members, or its ministry, in presence of the children. There may be defects and errors in the church or the minister; but if parents speak

of them in the presence of their children, they are putting up barriers in the way of their salvation hard to overcome.

These are the four personal factors in the success of the Sunday-school: let each do his part and the great end of the school's effort will be achieved in the full salvation of its scholars.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE POINT OF CONTACT

"How may we interest the older boys and girls in the Sunday-school lesson?" This question is frequently asked at Sunday-school conventions, and many teachers seem to think that it can be answered by an expert in a sentence or two. No easy solution of this question is possible, otherwise it would have been answered long ago, and the answer have been adopted successfully by multitudes of perplexed teachers. Not infrequently as a partial reply to the question, the formation of a class organization is suggested with president, secretary, outlook committee, entertainment committee, and the like. That a class organization, if conducted by a wide-awake teacher, interests boys and girls and often holds them to the Sunday-school, cannot be questioned. Whether, however, these class organizations stimulate interest *in the lesson* as much as they do in the *organization* is an open question. They are good in themselves, I doubt not, but I fear that in many cases they do not result in any more studious attitude of the scholars toward the lesson itself.

Why is this question not asked so often with regard to the younger classes? Is it a fact that it is easier to interest younger scholars in the lesson than to interest those of maturer years? I rather doubt whether this be a fact. Young scholars, however, are not so apt to manifest a turbulent lack of interest as are the older ones. If



uninterested they still sit quietly and apparently listen to what the teacher has to say. With the older ones lack of interest is always betokened by lack of respectful attention, and so is more marked. If the truth were known, it is much to be feared that many a quiet and apparently attentive class of the younger ones is more bored than interested during the half hour of lesson teaching.

When we come to the root of the matter in order to answer the question, How to interest boys and girls in the lesson, we must first ask another question, namely, Why are these boys and girls not interested in the lesson? That they are deeply interested in many things we all acknowledge. The boys are profoundly interested in the last football match in their vicinity. In our cities where boys have access to the daily papers, they are tremendously fascinated by the last bicycle race or boxing match. Girls, too, are very deeply interested in and are profoundly affected by questions which appeal to their natural sensibilities. The trouble is not lack of interest in anything, but lack of interest specifically in the Sunday-school lesson. How easy it would be to teach the restless boy a lesson on boxing, shooting, or fishing!

There are two reasons (among others) why our scholars are not interested in the Sunday-school lesson. The first of these, of course, is, because they do not study the lesson at home. For this failure, too, there are causes. Public school lessons are so many and so long that many of our scholars feel that when they are through with these, they have done all the studying that they want to. It is distasteful to them again to pick up their books.

They had rather play or do anything under the sun in preference to further book work. This is not surprising when we consider the natural constitution of the average child.

The second reason is found in the fact that they do not see how the lesson, which deals with events and individuals of other lands and other centuries, has any bearing on their present day life, or any significance for them in the government of their course. Not realizing that there is any vital connection between David and Elijah and themselves, they do not feel any drawing toward the study of the lives and deeds of these individuals.

The third reason why many scholars do not take an interest in the lesson is that the home life gives them no assistance along this line. In too many instances the parents themselves are indifferent as to whether the child studies the Sunday-school lesson or not. In some instances, alas, parental influence is thoroughly antagonistic, the father being skeptical, possibly immoral, and the mother worldly. No wonder that under such circumstances scholars fail to feel any interest in things despised by their parents. These being among the reasons why children take no interest in the lessons, it behooves us to look around for such remedies as may be practically applied.

Of course every teacher will endeavor by entreaty and persuasion to lead the scholar to study. Something can be done along this line, but not very much. Furthermore, the teacher will, of course, visit in the home so as to secure by personal solicitation some coöperation on

the part of the mother and father in the teacher's own work. In cases where there are members of the Home Department in the homes of our scholars, it will not be very difficult to secure this coöperation. In other cases the problem is somewhat harder. Still something may be done along this line, and here, as everywhere else, every little helps, and with patience and prayer much may be accomplished.

In spite, however, of all this many teachers will still find a lack of interest on the part of their scholars. To diminish this lack of interest and secure intelligent attention, something more must be done. To help us to realize what this "something more" is, let the teacher pause and try to imagine the condition of mind in which many scholars come to the school. This boy has been to a football match yesterday, and his mind is full of "rushes," "touch-downs," "goals kicked," etc., etc. Nothing in the world seems to him half as important as a football victory, and very possibly he has made up his mind that he will organize a football team among his own associates. Another boy went to the circus last night. He saw them loop-the-loop and climb spiral ascents on a single wheel. These tricks are the dominant interest in his life just now, and he is longing to tell what he has seen. Each of these boys would be perfectly willing to teach a lesson to the rest of the class, provided the theme were that which commands his present absorbing interest.

On the other hand the teacher of the girls' class will find equally varied interests governing the minds of her scholars. One of them has just got the position of cash

girl in some department store, and is full of her new experiences. Another one made a visit to her aunt this week and had a splendid time. Naturally, she wants to tell of what she has seen, and, perhaps, display some presents which fill her heart with joy. Still another girl is full of the fact that some young boy has begun to pay her rather marked attention, and while this scholar will not speak of this fact (holding it as a kind of sacred secret), still, this fact is that which interests her more deeply than anything else at the present time. These are merely illustrations of things which our scholars are exercised with. Probably every single scholar in many classes has some present interest which competes only too successfully with interest in the Sunday-school lesson. The teacher who fails to take these facts into consideration will, by just so much, fail to do the best work possible in her class.

If the teacher could talk sympathetically with each scholar about his or her interests, it would be easy to claim their rapt attention, but the teacher cannot do this, as her main duty is to handle the lesson for the day.

(Here we might say that the teacher who comes very early to the school and meets the scholars before the session begins can very appropriately talk with scholars about such themes as interest them. In that way the teacher wins the sympathy of the scholars, and at the same time allows the safety-valve to blow off some steam before bringing the attention of the class to the lesson itself.)

What things can be done to centralize attention on the lesson? We reply, by hook or by crook you must arouse

their interest before you can command their attention. To do this you must establish in the minds of the scholars a "point of contact" between the scholar's experience and the lesson itself. You must come to the plane of the scholar before you try to lift the scholar to your plane. To begin to talk about Solomon or David or Peter at once is to lose time at the start. The beginning must be made with something with which the scholars are familiar and in which they are at least slightly interested. They then can be led on to the unfamiliar. Let the teacher always start from the known and then lead to the unknown. In this way victories may be won, where otherwise defeats are certain.

Fortunately in nearly every lesson this course is possible, if attention be paid to discovering the point of contact. Human experience in all ages is very much alike. The experiences of men living three thousand years ago have many points of contact with those of men living in the twentieth century. Joys, sorrows, hopes, fears, disappointments, victories, defeats; these experiences are repeated in every generation. Absalom, the bad boy of thirty centuries ago, has his counterpart in some bad boy known to us. The temple of Solomon stands in some perfectly comprehensible relation to the modern cathedral, and, indeed, to the very church in which your Sunday-school meets. It is for the teacher to discover this point of contact, and to begin the lesson by making it clear to the class. This being done, it is comparatively easy to go on and hold the interest of the class through the half hour allotted to the lesson. Since the above statements have been abstract, and since concrete illustrations are

more helpful than abstract statements, we must now give some of these illustrations of how to use the point of contact. Some of these illustrations will be drawn from lessons already taught, the purpose being to let the teacher compare his own work with that suggested here. Others of these illustrations will apply to lessons in general in the hope that the teacher may be induced to make use of them, or (better still) to improve on them.

In a lesson on Temperance, the writer once taught a class of girls (in the presence of their teacher), only one of whom had looked at the lesson. Two had lost their *Quarterlies*, and all of them, according to the teacher's account, were systematically uninterested. The point of contact in this case turned on the word "lost." Having found that two *Quarterlies* were lost, the writer put on a bit of paper, with a blue pencil, in large letters, the word "lost." Each girl read it. He then inquired about other things they had lost, and quite a list was given by the scholars. By this time their interest had become quite keen, since they were talking about personal experiences. They were then asked whether they had ever seen a drunken man. To this all responded affirmatively. The question was then put whether they had ever seen a drunken woman. Two had, the rest had not. The statement was then made that every drunken person has lost something, and from the scholars, by question and answer, it was brought out that every drunkard loses money, time, health, character. Each of these was written down with blue pencil, and each scholar asked to read it aloud. In this way, with added narrative, the time went quickly, the scholars' interest was intense, and, as a

result, one little girl voluntarily decided never again to drink even beer.

In the lesson of Solomon's dream at Gibeon, the point of contact was found by the writer along either of two lines. First line, dreams. Scholars were asked about their dreams. This interested them. Then attention was called to the fact that God does not speak in dreams now, as he did in olden times, because we have more light from the Bible than Solomon or Abraham had. Then the class was told that we were going to study today about a very important dream of young King Solomon. In this way they were led from the known to the unknown, and from the modern to the ancient. Another point of contact was used by him, namely, desires. The class was asked what would be their reply if their parents said, "What do you want for a Christmas present?" Of course the interest of the class was instantly won, and the replies intensely given. This point of contact proved so attractive that it was easy to pass over to God's question to Solomon, "Ask what I shall give thee," and Solomon's reply.

For the application of this lesson the word "choose" was written on a pad of paper, and the attention of the class called to the fact that we have many choices. Some of our choices might be called good, others might be called better, and still others might be called best. These words were then written on the pad as given below. The class was then led to see that choice for bodily things might be called good. They were then still further led to perceive that choice for intellectual things were better, but that, after all, choice for spiritual things,

which are eternal, was best. The appropriate words were then written on the pad as given below, then the class was led to see that every one must choose, and the words "I must" were added. In this way the attention of the class was gained throughout, and the truth enforced, that we must choose every day that which is either good, better, or best.

*I must choose    Good,    Better,    Best,  
                         Bodily,    Mental,    Spiritual.*

If the lesson be one on Jesus healing the sick I would suggest as point of contact our sickness and healings. Begin by asking how many have been sick? Ascertain what the trouble was, and what the remedy was, and its effect. Then go on to ask whether doctors are always successful. Let the scholars tell of some case where the doctor failed. Ask whether it would not be fine if we could have a family doctor who never failed. Of course all will say yes; then go on still further and say, that there was once a man in Palestine who never failed in his treatment of any disease. Tell them that in one lesson we have two cases where he healed diseases, and in one case he never saw the person whom he healed at all. Then draw out from your scholars the story of Jesus' marvelous work.

In a lesson on the Transfiguration, there might be made several points of contact. The one we would suggest is as follows: "Of all the people that have ever lived whom would you most like to see?" Some of your scholars will probably mention dear ones of their own, fathers or mothers, who have passed away; others may



mention George Washington, Napoleon, or some great national hero. If you have lately been studying about David, lead them to realize how fine it would be if we could see him and hear him sing some of his Psalms. Then lead by questioning to the fact, that Moses and Elijah were greater men than David, and it would be grander to see them, if we could, than to see the king of Israel. Now lead up to the fact that Moses and Elijah did appear to Christ, and then draw out the lesson facts as given in the text.

In all these efforts to set forth clearly the point of contact, let me assure the teacher that much help can be given by the simple use of pencil and block of paper in the presence of the class. This seems so simple a thing that many teachers never try it. The writer has tried it often, even in classes of adults, and has never found it to fail in interesting them and attracting and fastening their attention. If you find it to fail, send the writer a letter to that effect, and be assured that so confident is he of the truth of what he has said that he will be quite surprised to receive any such letter.

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## CHAPTER VII

### SOME DEFECTS OF MODERN CHILD-STUDY

Children have always been a delightful study on the part of parents and of those who have had much to do with them. In this sense, child-study (or paidology, as it is now called) is not a new thing. Many facts about childhood have been known for many centuries, such as the great *difference* between one child and another. This is apparent even in the same family, where one child is quick and bright, and the next one, born under the same roof and reared with the same surroundings, is dull and stupid. Moral qualities, also, show the same remarkable diversity, and we do not know at all how to account for these striking differences.

At the same time, it has been a fact of common knowledge that all children have certain *similarities*, whether they be born rich or poor, and whether they are Chinese or Caucasian. In their mental and physical development we may look for progress along the same general lines.

All these facts we say have been known since the dawn of civilization. But in these later days more care has been taken in the minute study of childhood, and the effort is being made to know all that we can, down to the minutest detail, of these children whose lives we are trying to mold. In connection with this, we call attention

to the fundamental proposition on which many of these modern paidologists work. They believe that all children develop along the same lines on which they claim that the human race has developed. As the race (they say) has developed from barbarism to civilization, and from grosser life to more refined life, so the child develops from a life of animalism into civilized forms of thought and action. As the race loved deeds of violence at the start, so the child loves that which is rude and even violent, and develops first the ruder instincts and traits of character.

From this, teachers, like Pres. G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University, draw the deduction that children, in their earlier years, or until they reach the age of adolescence, should be taught from the Old Testament and not from the New Testament, because the characters of the Old Testament were ruder and less altruistic (unselfish) than those of the New Testament, and these are the virtues that the younger children admire rather than those of the gentle John and the still gentler Jesus. The writer has heard President Hall say publicly that, on this account, he would not have children under fourteen years of age taught anything about Jesus. (Except, perhaps, at Christmas and Easter.) He would hold them to the lives of Old Testament heroes, and only let them study about Jesus Christ after they are fourteen years of age.

To such depths of folly has this modern child-study, in one of its phases, led otherwise sensible men to fall. As the writer heard the argument alluded to above developed, he could not help thinking that it was no new thing. Even in the time of the Master there seem

to have been some who vaguely thought along the same lines. For we are told that when certain mothers wished to bring their children straight to Jesus for a blessing, the disciples rebuked the mothers. Did they think for such little ones the heroes of the Old Testament were quite sufficient and (though they did not formally say so) it would be time enough for these children to know about Jesus when they should reach the age of about fourteen? But this was not at all the mind of the Master, for he was much displeased, and said, "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Now, whatever may be the position of paidologists, presidents, or professors, no mother, who loves her child, will think for one moment of withholding from the little one the knowledge of the blessed Lord of the children as well as of adults. Wise men may theorize as they will, but every true Christian mother and teacher will do her best to bring the child, as soon as possible, into loving relationship with the Son of Mary.

The fact is that little children can be trained to deeds of gentleness without much difficulty, and can be shown the grandeur of "altruism" much more readily than can be done in later years. The whole theory is based on a faulty foundation, and, therefore, much that is built up on it is not true to fact. Adults can be horribly selfish, and so can children. But children can be as unselfish and self-denying as any man that ever lived. Any one who has seen children knows this, and it is useless to preach to him that he must wait until a boy is fourteen years of age before he can expect unselfish-

ness to show itself, or the beautiful character of Jesus to be appreciated.

We have thus dwelt on this mistake of one school of these modern paidologists, because many are led astray by their specious arguments, and so are mystified and perplexed, and do not know just how to teach those who are committed to their care. In all such cases mother-wit and ordinary common sense will not lead us astray, while too much theorizing may lead us into many a bog out of which it is harder to get than it was to get in. The simple fact is, that if our children are more animal and violent in their earlier years than they are at, or about, fourteen years of age, that should be one reason why we should *all the more* try and cultivate the gentler virtues and the altruistic spirit in them, by presenting such characters as that of Jesus and John rather than those of the sterner Old Testament heroes. These can wait until a later time.

The modern method of child-study is largely one of question and answer. Question papers are sent out by the thousand to parents and teachers of children, and they are asked either to have the children write their own answers, or to write them as the children give them. These are then collected and tabulated to see what the replies are. For example, from a Questionnaire on "Religious Experience," we take the following questions as specimens: "Were you conscious of God's approval when you did right, and of his disapproval when you did wrong? How did this differ from the approval or disapproval of conscience? In your answer to this question, distinguish carefully between what you then

felt, and what you now think about it." Again, "Look over the marked changes in your circumstances in life, such as occupation, place of residence, social surroundings or associates, pastor, teachers, lines of study or reading, and tell whether changes in your religious life have been coincident with these other changes. State the direction of the change in each case."

Again, from a Questionnaire on "Temperament," we take the following: "Is he a warm and intense, or cold and passionless soul? Does he get angry or indignant easily? Does he get over it quickly? When he is angry or indignant, which of the following are characteristic of him,—(a) Ready feeling without action? (b) Intense feeling with immediate action, speech included? (c) Feeling too feeble to produce very positive action? (d) Tendency to brood over his indignation, but not to act? (e) Tendency to plan deliberate revenge, or the improvement of conditions, and action to that end in cool blood? (f) Fixed and unchangeable aversion?"

Such are the kinds of questions that are asked in these Questionnaires by the score, and on the tabulation of the replies the inferences are based.

Now it would take a philosopher, accustomed to analyze his feelings to the last degree of minuteness, to reply in any reliable way to such analytical questions. Not one person in a hundred is capable of doing this, especially as many of these questions relate to an experience of many years past. As, for example, "State your age at each period of marked religious awakening in your life. Indicate in a word (as if that could possibly

be done!) what each of these periods of awakening led to; as, for example, conversion, sanctification, joining the church or being confirmed, restoration after falling, reconsecration after a period of coldness, etc." It must at a glance be manifest that not one in a hundred is competent to give a satisfactory reply to such questions as these. Of course these particular questions were not meant for children, but for adults, but even so, the replies must be most unreliable at the best. Nothing very permanent can be based on the replies received.

Indeed, the doctrinaire nature of many of these questions is apparent to any one who will thoughtfully read them over and try to frame a reply in his own case. They really seem to be wrought out of the "inward consciousness" of the individual who has been brooding over these things, and many of them hardly apply to real life as we find it among living men and women. One of these Questionnaires was sent to the writer to be scattered among fallen, but rescued, men. He told the sender that the men would not be able to understand, much less to reply to them. As a result of the sending out of this particular Questionnaire, the writer received but two replies, and both were the same, namely, "I do not understand what you are after."

As an example of the way in which such methods of ascertaining the facts regarding childhood may lead us into error, we will adduce an effort to find out what are the *spontaneous* interests of children in the Bible. A Questionnaire was sent out whose design was to find out what children spontaneously preferred in the Bible, in the way of Bible scenes, Bible stories, and Bible char-

acters. Bear in mind in all that follows, that the effort was to find out the SPONTANEOUS interest of the children in these things. Bear, also, in mind that the theory of the new school of paidology contends that the more violent and aggressive Bible characters are the favorites among children. With these two fundamental facts in view, we find ourselves much surprised when the most favorite character is not one of the "stronger" heroes of the Old Testament, but John the Evangelist. Out of a total of 981 votes, John received 152, while next to him came the Apostle Peter with 125 votes, and then came Jesus with 114 votes.

As the writer came on this list, he found himself wondering why so many votes were cast for the *most gentle* of the disciples, when they ought to have been cast for some hero like Daniel, or Gideon. It then occurred to him to find out at what time the Questionnaire was sent out. He found that it went out about the end of the year 1899. Then it further occurred to him to look and see what the International Lessons were dealing with about that time. He found that during the first six months of 1899 we were studying the *Gospel of John*. Then he at once saw the reason why the Apostle John had captured the major part of the votes. It was simply because the scholars for six months in that year had had John, John, John dinned into them. So their votes did not represent at all their SPONTANEOUS interest in Bible characters, but that interest that teachers had impressed on them for half of a year.

Of the 981 votes cast for the most popular persons in the Bible, 476 were for persons about whom the Sunday-



school lessons of that year had been teaching. This shows that the scholars gave for the most part those characters of whom they had been *most recently studying*. But if this is the case, what becomes of the effort to get at their SPONTANEOUS interest in Bible characters?

Another set of the questions dealt with the favorite Bible scenes. Here, too, we see that what the pupils had just been over, influenced, if it did not absolutely dominate, their choices. Here, 674 votes were cast for fifteen different scenes. Of these, ten scenes are from that part of the Word that the scholars had been studying within the year, and for these 505 of the votes were cast. Two of these scenes were the Raising of Lazarus, and the Woman at the Well, and these are found only in the Gospel of John, which was the Gospel studied that year.

For the Bible stories there were 720 votes cast, divided among fifteen different stories. Here the Selling of Joseph was the most popular, receiving 147 votes. The lessons for 1899 had not touched on that story. But before we conclude that this vote shows the SPONTANEOUS interest of the voters, we must look further. If we do this, we find that the most popular stories are just those that have been most frequently and most vividly illustrated in picture Bibles, and colored stories of Bible scenes. See the stories that got votes, and you will realize the truth of what we say. David and Goliath, Moses and Pharaoh's Daughter, Story of Ruth, Noah's Ark, The Prodigal Son, The Calling of Samuel, Samson and the Philistines. Now every child has had

picture-books with these stories as the basis for the illustrations. And, of course, they have remembered the narrative.

The more one studies into the true inwardness of these Questionnaires, the more puzzled one becomes, and the more doubtful one is of their reliability in reflecting the desires of childhood at large. For example, in the Questionnaire that we have been considering we find that the answers to the questions that went out were divided equally among boys and girls, of the ages from eight to twenty inclusive. It is easy to see that this division would give replies from forty boys and forty girls of each year of age (*i.e.*, forty each from those eight years old, and the same number from those nine years old, etc.). Now it seems to us beyond controversy that to base general conclusions on the answers of forty boys, for *all* boys of the same age, is to build on a very slender foundation. A much larger number should be taken of each age grade before we can make any reliable generalization. This fact by itself should undermine many of the conclusions which the author has reached. For to base conclusions about all boys ten years of age, from the answers of forty boys of that age to certain questions, is hardly allowable.

Another peculiarity of some of these paidologists is to be found in the fact that they dwell far too much in their study of child-nature on freaks and neurotic children, who are wholly abnormal in their development. In the "Spiritual Life," by Dr. Coe, we see this illustrated at considerable length. This gives to the reader a one-sided view of the truth, and unless he is on his

guard, he will be misled. In this some of these paidologists are like certain penologists, who look on all men as more or less criminal in their tendencies. Such men become one-sided and unsafe in their teaching, and mislead the average teacher who has to do with wholesome children. The impression made by the setting forth of abnormal children is like that which is made on the mind when much attention is paid to hypnotism, and occult theories of subliminal consciousness, and the like. However proper these discussions may be for the psychological laboratory, they are out of place in the study of the average Sunday-school teacher.

We have thus dwelt at length on some of the defects of the modern paidology, in order to sound a note of warning, lest teachers reading these modern works should be led astray by some of their conclusions. We feel quite sure that the results of no Questionnaire should be accepted unless *the Questionnaire itself be put to the test and be in turn questioned*. Only in this way can true conclusions be separated from those which are false. He who indiscriminately follows the conclusions of any of the modern school of paidologists will have cause to rue the day when he put himself into their hands.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE EARLY CONVERSION OF SCHOLARS

The early conversion of children is my theme in this chapter. It needs to be repeated a thousand times, that the Sunday-school teacher has two paramount aims in all her work. One is the conversion of those scholars who are not the Lord's children, and the other, the upbuilding in all Christian graces of those who have given themselves to God. All else in our work is, or should be, subsidiary to these two aims. That this is often not the case the writer knows well. But in all such cases the teacher has simply lost sight of that which is of the highest importance, and is really frittering away golden opportunities.

If in any Sunday-school a year or two passes without any of the scholars uniting with the church, be sure that there is something radically wrong with that school. Teachers are not faithful in their dealings with their scholars, or they would most certainly have such a blessing from God as would bring some of their members into the church.

At what age may scholars be converted?—This is a question often asked. To this we reply, at any age. It is possible for a child to be converted at so tender an age that we really do not know when the divine life was begun. Where parents consecrate their children to God from their birth (and in some cases before their birth) it

may well be that the child is filled with the Spirit from his earliest days. But this is not the experience in most cases. In our Sunday-schools the vast majority of scholars, as they come to the school, are manifestly not "born again." Many of them (especially in mission schools) come from utterly godless families, and the children are sent to Sunday-school as much to get rid of them as for any other purpose. But, alas! in many cases where the child comes from a Christian home the matter of the "new birth" has not been much thought of, and the child is evidently not one of the Lord's own.

In such cases how soon may we expect the child to be converted? We can lay down no rule here; but this we will say, "You should work for this blessed change at once, knowing that the Holy Spirit is willing to come into any human heart, and that the child is just as likely to receive him as the adult. Samuel and Daniel and Timothy are proofs that in its very early years a child may be a true follower of God. And in our days there are many instances where very young children have given good evidence of the inworking of the Divine Spirit."

Yet in spite of this, there are very many teachers who work on with no definite idea as to what is their great aim. If you were to meet such a teacher on her way to Sunday-school, and ask her, "What do you propose to aim for to-day?" her reply would probably be, "I am going to try and teach the lesson to my class."

Were you to push the question still further, and ask, "What is your final aim in this teaching of the lesson?" the reply would probably be more or less vague. Of

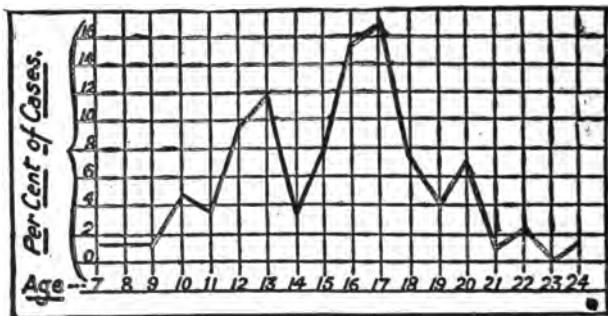
course, all teaching will hit only that at which it aims, and, if it aims at nothing definite, it will hit nothing. So if any teacher does not aim definitely at the conversion of her class, she cannot well expect to reach any such blessed result as having her scholars unite with the church.

But some teachers even take the ground that they cannot expect their scholars to accept Christ while they are still so young. As a teacher once said to the writer, "You don't suppose that my scholars are old enough to be converted!" Yet her scholars were over nine years of age. All such teachers think that their scholars will be converted "some time." And under that vague phrase they hide a kind of skeptical belief that "some time" is certainly not "to-day." This false creed again reacts on their practice, and the result is that their scholars are not urged to accept the Lord as their Saviour and Master "now."

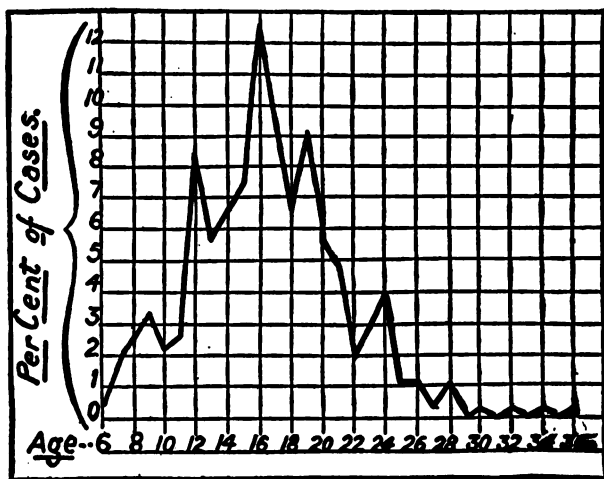
Now, in the face of all such false feeling, the experience of tried workers all the world over proves that just at these only years of childhood is the time when we may most confidently expect conversions among our Sunday-school scholars. From seven to eighteen years of age are the golden years for work of this kind with children. For, while there are true conversions under the age of seven and over the age of eighteen, *the vast majority* of those who give their hearts to God is found among those between the ages mentioned. Lately at the State Sunday-school Convention in New York my attention was strongly directed to this matter. Since then I have pursued the theme constantly, and have tried many experiments in various places. The first of these was at a

## 170 SPARKS FROM A SUPERINTENDENT'S ANVIL

meeting of the New York Presbytery. There were about one hundred and forty men present, all ministers



**AGE OF DECISIVE RELIGIOUS AWAKENING OF 84 MEN**



**AGE OF CONVERSION OF 272 MEMBERS OF ROCK RIVER CONFERENCE**

or elders. All were asked to rise who had been converted at or under sixteen years of age. Of those pres-

ent about one hundred and twenty at once rose to their feet. All present were much surprised at this result, for they had not expected to see such a majority testifying to their early conversion.

Another time the same question was put to a gathering of teachers in New York City, of all denominations. The same result followed, the great majority rising to testify that they had been converted at or under sixteen years of age. There were at that gathering three ministers as speakers. They were personally asked to tell the ages of their conversion. One answered, "I was converted at thirteen years of age." Another said, "I was converted at twelve years of age," while the last said that he was converted at fourteen years of age.

The writer has tried the same experiment in Brooklyn at a large convention of teachers, in Albany, in Saratoga, and in Ossining, and in all these cases with the same result. All this teaches us that the vast majority of our Sunday-school workers are the result of child-conversion. If any who read this article do not quite trust these statements, let them try the experiment for themselves at the very next convention that they attend, and they will need no further argument or facts in the case. They will then know for themselves that, so far as the present corps of workers in the church is concerned, they were brought to the Lord in the days of their early youth.

Further proof of the statement that we may expect more conversions at the ages above mentioned is found in the numerous tables that have been made showing the ages of conversion of large numbers of people. These have been tabulated, so as to set forth to the eye most



clearly the results of these inquiries. They are most interesting and instructive. Look carefully, for example, at the charts that we give above. They are taken from "The Spiritual Life," by Prof. George A. Coe. One chart begins at the age of six, and the other at the age of seven. In each case notice that at the age of nine or ten there is quite a marked increase of conversions. Then again at the ages of twelve and thirteen the rise is still more marked. But at sixteen and seventeen years of age the line marking conversions rises most startlingly. After that age the lines in both charts fall steadily and soon show very few conversions at all. Charts like these (of which many have been produced by various authors, and all with substantially the same showing) are food for most serious thought. They show us how God's Spirit has actually worked among those whose story is thus recorded, and there is no reason to doubt that the same Spirit is willing to work in the same way in your own Sunday-school.

If now any teacher should ask the question, Why are there so few conversions after seventeen years of age? the reply would be about as follows: When our boys and girls reach that age (with girls the experience would come about one year sooner) they find themselves entering on a new and most entrancing life. About that time it is that girls and boys begin to "keep company" with each other. The attraction of the sexes is most potent, and begins to drive out other thoughts and desires. This is as it should be, for it is one of nature's provisions. But its influence on the religious aspirations of the boy or girl is none the less marked on that account. If they

have accepted the Lord before that time, they stand fast in their profession, and the very fact that they are Christians tends to keep them steady ; but, if they are not yet believers, these counter-attractions tend to draw them away from the Sunday-school, and, indeed (for a time), from all distinctly religious thought. All teachers know how hard it is to hold boys and girls of this age in the class.

But as the years advance a little more the girl begins to look forward to married life, and the boy has to begin to look out for his living. These thoughts preoccupy their minds, and they think that they have no time for religious matters. They begin to drift away more and more from the Sunday-school and the church itself, until many of them are lost to all religious influences. This is the story of many thousands of our Sunday-school scholars, and it is a most sad one.

These facts underlie an appeal issued by the New York State Sunday-school Association to all workers in that state. In this appeal they say, "The average period during which Sunday-school scholars attend Sunday-school is not over ten years (say from six to sixteen).

"The report of the New York State Sunday-school Association indicates that down to 1900, on an average, less than two per cent. of the scholars a year, or less than twenty per cent. in ten years (that is, less than one-fifth of all), accept Christ while in the Sunday-school. After they leave, the statistics of conversion indicate that only about one-fifth more accept him during the entire balance of their lives, making in all only two-fifths of them that we have any reason to hope do so before they die.

"At present, since Decision Day has been largely adopted, the report of 1901 indicates that the rate of conversions in the Sunday-schools has about doubled; so that, if the present rate continues, somewhat under two-fifths of the scholars would accept Christ while in Sunday-school. After they leave, if we add another fifth for those who accept him in after life, we have somewhat less than three-fifths (about fifty-six per cent.) in all, and it is evident that these are more than we can reasonably hope will have accepted Christ to the end of their lives. But what of the other two-fifths (848,000 scholars) who are going down to Christless graves and to a Christless eternity?"

These are most serious facts for the Christian worker to face.—In view of them, does it not behoove us to do what lies in our power to remedy the deficiencies in our Sunday-schools? It seems to the writer that the immediate duty of all teachers is at once to begin to PRAY for the conversion of their scholars as they never have done before. Many teachers, especially those who have just begun their work, hardly realize that it is their duty to pray for the scholars by name, frequently, and that their prayer should be specifically for their conversion. Of course, the failure to realize the need or the possibility of conversion leads to a neglect of specific effort to secure that conversion. Many teachers never speak to the scholars personally about this matter. The natural consequence is that the number of converts from the Sunday-school is not by any means as large as it should be or as it might be.

This leads us to urge teachers to pray, to work for, and

to expect the "new birth" in the case of each scholar. The Holy Spirit is ever ready and anxious to coöperate with each teacher in this blessed work. Without his aid all our work is vain. But with his coöperation we may assuredly expect blessed results. This is one of the great advantages in the right use of Decision Day. It leads teachers to put forth definite effort for a definite result, and as a natural consequence they meet with much success. No school tries this plan honestly without feeling that it has been the right thing to do. Not that we are to wait until Decision Day comes, but that if anything has hindered us in making the requisite effort, that day brings home to us the duty and responsibility of our office as teachers.

But will the child-converts hold out?—This is a question often asked. In reply we ask, "Do adult converts always hold out?" Certainly not. But that is no reason for not trying to reach the adults. Now, though not all "child-converts" hold out, it yet is true that proportionately more hold out who are converted in their early years than of those converted in adult years. This is the testimony of many of our most active pastors. It is the testimony of the writer as well, who has had much to do with children who have given their hearts to the Master.

Of course, in all such cases the duty of the careful oversight of the child-believer must not be forgotten. He is a lamb of the fold, and lambs must be carefully tended. But this is a blessed duty, and all who have tried to fulfil it have reaped a rich harvest in the growing activity of those who have confessed Christ in their

youth. And yet just here is where many make a grave mistake. As soon as the child has been received into the church they think that the end has been reached. So they neglect doing anything more for the child, and he is left to his own devices. This is most reprehensible. Instead of all being done, all has only just been begun. Now follows the lifelong task of training for service, and, if this be done, there will follow the useful Christian life.

That all that has been said above is most important is apparent as soon as we realize that the church of the future is to be made up of the children of the present. Look thoughtfully at your primary classes. The church of forty years from now is to be made up of members of just such classes. If these fail, the church of the future fails with them. Does not this show the immense importance of bringing these little ones into the fold of the blessed Shepherd before they have strayed away on the barren hills and have been lost? If it does not do this, then nothing on earth can.

## BOOK III

# The School or How We Teach

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### CHAPTER I

#### THE WIDENING HORIZON

**My theme now is the workers' widening horizon.**— This theme I will put in a sort of autobiographical form for the sake of clearness, and simply because it may help others to see how in the case of one Sunday-school worker the horizon, originally very narrow, widened and widened again, until it became international.

My first Sunday-school class was one that I took while in college, and it involved a walk of five miles there and back. There was sufficient earnestness to lead the teacher to go to his class, even when he had to wade through snow-drifts up to his waist. So far as I remember the weather never kept me from the class. I had a class of boys and was interested in them, but I had no idea that the class was a part of a larger school, and the school as a whole never interested me much. I never came to know other teachers in the school, and no one ever made any effort to make us acquainted. I had never been taught that the main aim of every teacher was *the conversion* of his scholars, and after that their *upbuilding in religious life*. So I aimed to make

the lesson story of the day clear and interesting, and then I ceased all further effort. I did not know whether any of my scholars were Christians, and I am ashamed to say it never occurred to me that I ought to find out. Alas! what ignorance!

After entering work as a city missionary, it became my duty to superintend my own Sunday-school. Then my horizon soon widened, and I saw many things of which I had not dreamed before. I saw that a school is made up of many classes, and that the school is greater than any one class. The interests of the school were vaster than those of the individual class, and at times must override the class. I saw, too, that to make a school good there must be more than individual class teaching. There was the music that must be made good musically and helpful spiritually. There is a difference between a concert and Sunday-school singing. The one is for pleasure only, the other for spiritual uplift. I saw that the matter of the records of the school was an important one, and that there were many ways of keeping the record, some good and some bad. The best one had to be selected and put into practice. As a matter of fact, we devised our own method and had our own record books prepared. Now every school need not do this, but in our case it was truly necessary.

Then there was the library.—It was in a shocking condition. The books were worn out, and many of them not at all suited to the needs of our scholars. It was useless to buy books that the scholars would not call for. So much time and care were given to making a judicious selection. The result was that the library began to do

the work that it never did before, and the scholars began to read what was provided for them.

Then came up the question of the proper grading of the school. It had not been carefully attended to, so that scholars of very uneven ages were found in the same class. This was a most delicate matter, as we found that "feeling" was often to be taken into account. We found out, however, what the best principles of grading were, and slowly and with much tact applied them to our school, with the result that before long all the teachers found that they were working with much more ease than ever before, and those who had opposed grading now praised it as much as did the others.

Then came the question of the blackboard and platform review. We had never seen any school in which these were used. But it seemed needful to adopt both, as a means of enforcing the teaching in the classes. So a blackboard was secured, and the platform review was commenced. It was found that both were a great help to the school, and now no one in the school would for one moment counsel abandoning them. For, with the blackboard, much can be done to assist the teacher, which he cannot well do for himself with the limitations that exist in the ordinary class.

Oh, but the widening of our horizon went on apace!—It soon became apparent that the school needed a teachers' meeting, not only for purposes of business, but even more for the study of *what* we were to teach, and *how* we were to teach it. So such a meeting was inaugurated, and has been kept up to this day. Not all the teachers ever attend, but all have a chance to do so,



and all are urged to come. Those who do come are helped, and, of course, their classes receive the benefit that the teacher derives from the meeting. An ideal school would be one in which all the teachers meet each week and together study the lesson, and then in the main school teach the same general points, so that the platform review could cover them again in their outline.

Furthermore, we found as never before, that the main aim of the teacher should be the conversion of the scholar, and then his upbuilding in the Christian life. Toward this we then began to bend our energies. Much prayer and effort were expended to reach these two important results, and with God's blessing we met with much success. For while when we took the school there were but two per cent. of the school (exclusive of the primary department) that were members of the church, in a few years we had thirty-six per cent. that were members of the church. Everything possible was done to build up these church-members in their most holy faith, and not without success.

Another thing that soon attracted our attention was the lack of real order in the school. There was much late coming, and the doors were ever ajar. This was an evil that we had thought was necessary. We soon found out our mistake. So we began to plan to remedy it, and the result was a most blessed transformation. We now had quiet and order while we were worshipping, and the further result was that the teachers could do better work than they formerly did. The school responded to our call and tardiness soon grew less and less. For instance, one Sunday out of a total attendance of 579 there were

only twenty-nine who were late. All who visit the school comment on this small percentage of late comers and at the quiet way in which they come in when the doors are opened at stated times, while the whole school does nothing but wait quietly for them to take their seats. By the by, outside of the doors there is a sign setting forth in large letters "I am early." This hangs thus until the school is called to order. Then it is at once reversed, and now it reads "I am late." This text the late comers have to study while they wait until the doors are opened for them to steal to their seats.

So from time to time we found our horizon widening.—But all this time our horizon did not extend beyond the boundary lines of our own school. We acted in all our work just as though there were no other school in the city or the world. In due time, however, it began to dawn on us that there were other schools besides our own. There were, in fact, four hundred of them in our own city. We seemed to be impressed with the fact that we had some relations to these schools. There was a Sunday-school Association in the city, of which it seemed that we should form an active part. They had much to teach us, and it might be that we had some things that we could teach them. At all events we felt that we ought to be a part of that larger army of Sunday-school workers, who were trying to make our city better. So we threw in our forces with them. Of course, there were expenses connected with this association, and the schools had to meet them. It was only right that our school should share the burden. So in our budget the amount that we thought right was appropriated to that purpose, and it

has been paid in each year since. Meetings that were held for the enlargement of the Sunday-school horizon were attended, and in this way much good was gained, and it may be some good was imparted. At all events, we felt that it was good to have a broader horizon than that which we had enjoyed before.

At the same time we noticed that some of the schools of the city did not feel in the same way, and neither attended such meetings as the city association held, nor contributed to the needful expense. But these schools seemed to fall behindhand in efficiency. They were narrow and shriveled. What they needed was to broaden out, or they could not possibly grow as they should do. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." So we found that the broadening of our horizon, while it called for time and money, repaid us a thousandfold. We could not have grown as we did, had we confined our efforts to our own individual school. In broadening, we found our own great advantage.

But this was not all.—Up to this time we had not thought of the State of New York in which we lived at all. We acted as though there were no Sunday-schools outside of our own city. Presently it began to dawn on us that there was a State Sunday-school organization, which covered the whole state, and that so far, we had had no relationship with that larger work. Evidently this was not as it should be. The state was doing much for the improvement of Sunday-school methods in many lines, and it was also sending missionaries to destitute parts of the state to start new Sunday-schools, or to

revive those that for various causes had fallen on sleep. This was a much-needed work. Then there was the great Annual Meeting of the State Organization, at which the very best speakers were secured, and who gave of their rich experience, for the benefit of all. We had not been in touch at all with this wider work, and, as a consequence, our horizon was not as wide as it should be.

The result was that we "geared" our machinery into this wider work, and became a part of the larger work. Just as we had learned that the individual school is larger than the single class, and that the city was larger than any one Sunday-school, so we now learned that the State was larger even than the great city of New York, and that to the State we owed much, and from the State we might learn much. So we became a part of the larger work. Here, too, of course, there was expenditure to be met, and the State had no one to look to for this but the individual schools. Our school was, therefore, swung into line, and from that day to this it has given regularly to the State work. We have sent delegates to the State convention, and have felt that we were a part of a very large movement for the uplifting of our own State, in things spiritual.

But even the Empire State has something larger than itself to look after. This, too, we learned in due time. There is the International Sunday-school work, represented by the International Sunday-school Association, and this is a work of the highest importance. At the first International Convention that we ever attended, at Atlanta, Ga., we were much surprised to see so many delegates from all over the Union, all of whom had paid

their own expenses. None of these men had anything to gain, politically or financially. Indeed, many of these came at very great sacrifice of time and money. Well do we remember the uplift that the State of Georgia gained from that convention. On the wall there was a huge map of the United States. Each State that was organized had a large gilt star on it, and in each State each organized county was similarly marked with a small star. Georgia had *no star, large or small*. On the third day we came to the convention, and lo! Georgia was covered with a large piece of gilt paper. Then some one from that State explained that they were ashamed that they were not organized for Sunday-school work, and that they covered the State with gilt paper, to show that they meant to organize the whole State just as soon as possible.

The next International Convention came three years later at Toronto. In the meantime, Georgia had organized, and that State appeared at Toronto with *seventy-two delegates, headed by their governor*. Truly, the International Convention in Atlanta had done wonders for that State. Probably in no other way could the same amount of good have been done in the way of Sunday-school progress in that State. The fact is, that wherever the International Convention goes, it wakens the State in which it is held to better and larger work. In this way the International work is an International blessing that it would be hard to overestimate. The last one that was held in Louisville stirred that city to its depths, and did an incalculable amount of good. Our own school had two delegates there, and it did them good and did the school good as well.

But this International work stretches out to foreign lands. It reaches England, France, India, Australia, New Zealand. Conventions have been held in London more than once, to which hundreds of delegates from the States have gone. In 1904 there was a vast International Convention held in Jerusalem, to which more than seven hundred delegates went from the States and Canada. Besides this, a shipload went from England and the Continent. The next one was held in Rome, the Eternal City. Thus the Sunday-school movement has world-wide relations, and does an incalculable amount of good. Indeed, I think it may be truly said that no other movement in the modern world has in it the promise of vast usefulness that is found in the Sunday-school movement. To be a part of that vast army is a grand thing, and to help along all that it stands for is a great privilege.

There remains only one more widening of the horizon that we can now see. That will come in the day when all things are made clear. Then we shall see, as now it is not possible for us to see, that the Sunday-school movement is not only International but *Inter-mundane*. It stretches out into the world that is to come. It lays hold on heaven as well as on this world. For in that last great Convention, when the ransomed of the Lord shall gather, it will be seen that a vast army of the redeemed have come out of the ranks of the great Sunday-school army of which your school and mine are a part. Then we shall see how vast is the horizon which we should have, even here and now. Only eternity can tell how great the opportunity and the privilege of be-

longing to this great host, and doing our best to make the banners of this army march victoriously forward.

How stands it with your school, my reader?—Have you any such horizon as we have here indicated? Or are you still bound down merely to the consideration of the interest of *your own individual school*? If this latter be the case, is it not time for you to awake? Or if your superintendent and pastor are asleep, is it not your privilege to arouse them, and try to lead them into the large privilege of this truly grand International Sunday-school field? Ought not your Sunday-school to have a delegate at the next State Convention, and at the next International Convention which is to be held in San Francisco, in the spring of 1911? Will your school be any worse off if it gears itself into this larger movement and feels the pulse of the grand onward sweep of the Sunday-school cause? Surely, you will be more of a gainer than you at present realize if you, in the way indicated, broaden your horizon.

## CHAPTER II

### ORGANIZED BIBLE CLASSES

NOTE.—The following is by J. W. Miles, president of the "Organized Bible Class Union," and is most suggestive. It will appeal to all who have adult classes, whether of men or women.

IN the realm of facts it appears to be established :

(a) That of the present church-membership in the United States between eighty and ninety per cent. received religious instruction as children in the Bible Schools.

(b) That as large a proportion were converted at or previous to seventeen years of age. (Out of 1,784 cases of Christian men examined the average age of conversion was found to be 16.4.—*Dr. McKinney's "The Child for Christ,"* page 50.)

(c) That in the State of New York, previous to the year 1901, about twenty per cent. of the Bible School population united with the church while members of the schools, and about twenty per cent. after leaving the schools.

(d) That since the year 1901, by reason of the wide adoption of Decision Day and the especial evangelistic work of the State Sunday-school Association, the proportion of conversions has apparently largely increased, so that now it is estimated that about forty per cent. of the Bible School population are being received into church-membership.



This means then :

(1) That the Bible School of to-day is the church of to-morrow and, therefore, the most important department in the evangelistic work of the church.

(2) That the great harvest field for conversions is among the young.

(3) That even with the observance of days of decision in the schools, there remain about forty out of every hundred that, as far as we know, are not saved.

For those who really desire the conversion of souls (and what sincere Christian does not ?) the above statements are of tremendous importance. While the average age of conversion is between sixteen and seventeen years, the age at which scholars resign from the Bible School, because they think they are too old, is between fourteen and eighteen years. Or, in other words, at the period of life when the scholar is most apt to decide for Christ, he is also most apt to resign from the school and its influences. It is at this point that the larger part of the forty per cent. loss to the church occurs, and, therefore, it is the weak spot in our Bible School work. How shall we strengthen it ?

Thus far there has been no better or more practical method devised than that of the organized class ; and reports from schools where the organized class has been properly established seem to prove that it is serving well its beneficent purpose of restraining resignations. It provides for the young men and young women opportunities naturally demanded by their rapidly developing powers, at an age when without such recognition they would be most apt to resign from the school. Hereto-

fore the young people have had no place of their own in the Bible School. They were too old, or thought themselves too old, to be classed as children, and too young to feel much sympathy or *camaraderie* in the Bible class for elders and deacons. The fact is, we older ones have forgotten the feelings and desires that we experienced at that age, and failing to put ourselves in their places have also failed to provide for them a recognition meeting their requirements.

When the writer was a lad he knew an inventor who originated many brilliant mechanical conceptions. And these conceptions were not of the "perpetual motion" order, but practical and along the line of machines for the cheaper production of necessary articles. Few of these machines, however, reached completion, but those that did were finished, when possible, by other hands than his. The difficulty was that the inventor would carry out his conception nearly to completion, and then fascinated with a new idea he would abandon the old work, well advanced, perhaps, but incomplete. Is not this about what we have been doing in our Bible Schools? We take the little ones into our Beginner's Department and, with loving care and labor, carry them through the Primary and Junior grades, until, at last, they reach the main schoolroom. There they remain two or three years longer, perhaps, and then resign, for there is ordinarily no further promotion. We begin well, but apparently fail just before completion, as the inventor did with his mechanical conceptions. A railroad of fifty miles between two cities would be a most unsatisfactory thing if the last ten miles had no grading, no road-bed, and no

rails. For a vast number of our young people in the Bible School the road from the city of earth to the city of heaven lacks completion in the last ten miles. All through his school experience the scholar has been under the stimulus and hope of future promotion, but just at the age when this stimulus is most needed it is taken from him. His interest grows cold when he reaches a grade that holds no promise of further advancement and he resigns from the school. Under these circumstances the wonder is not that there is a loss of forty or fifty per cent. to the church, but that there is not a loss of seventy-five or eighty per cent.

How shall we make our work more perfect and complete?

The answer to this question appears to be given by the organized class for young people. Toward his promotion into this class the boy looks with eager anticipation. It is the token of his graduation out of childhood into young manhood. In such a class, bound in fellowship with companions of his approximate age, he loses his repugnance for the school as a place for children only, and finds a sufficient shield for the oversensitiveness regarding his youth that belongs to all boys in the transition stage between boyhood and manhood. Class organization recognizes his individuality, provides room for personal participation, and bestows a sense of personal possession. It is his own department in the Bible School. As a member of such a class with its appropriate measure of autonomy he is satisfied. It is what he wants. Further, it is what he ought to have. It is his right.

Teachers, let us meet our young people on their own

ground, and by providing for them an organized class, show that we neither look upon them as children nor fail to appreciate their right to a special and distinctive section in the Bible School economy.

#### ROUND TABLE ON ORGANIZED BIBLE CLASSES FOR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN

Question.—What is an organized Bible class ?

Answer.—An organized Bible class is one having a president and other officers chosen periodically by and from its own members.

Q.—What are the advantages of an organized Bible class ?

A.—(a) Scholars, especially in the adolescent stage, like to belong to something of their own in which the developing altruistic sense may have room for exercise among their fellows. The “gang instinct” draws them together, and stimulates a class spirit of fraternal union. “Our Class” has a much deeper and stronger meaning to them than “Our School.” Young people of seventeen or eighteen years or over are attached to the school, if at all, by a thread; they are fastened to their own organized class by a rope.

(b) Interest in anything grows in proportion to our participation. There is a sense of personal responsibility attached to an office, and of the same kind, though lesser in degree, to the vote that elects an officer. Young America eats, sleeps, and breathes democracy. He wants a voice in things. From his point of view arbitrary government belongs to childhood. The consciousness of his developing strength must find somewhere opportuni-

ties for expression. If there is no organized class to gratify his natural desire, interest fades, and resignation follows. He quits.

(c) Other things being equal there is no greater incentive for culture than the stimulus of association. Far more can be accomplished for the individual if others are with him in the pursuit of either physical, mental, or spiritual development (Prov. 27 : 17). Association creates in the gymnasium a physical atmosphere, in the college an intellectual atmosphere, and in the organized Bible class a spiritual atmosphere.

Q.—Is the organized class a “club”?

A.—The organized Bible class is NOT a “club.” Its object is the cultivation of the spiritual nature through the study of the Divine Book. This object is fundamental and primary. Such social features as the class may have are merely incidental and secondary.

Q.—What is the experience of others with the organized Bible class?

A.—The Englewood [Chicago] Baptist Sunday-school had a small class. Since organization they have grown to nearly two hundred. The First Presbyterian Sunday-school of the same place had a class of six, but it had “run down” and was a class in name only. They organized and now have a membership of over one hundred. The Christian Sunday-school organized with seven members and in a year it grew to sixty. In a school in DeKalb, Ill., eight or ten men got together and organized. The class in four months increased to eighty members. In Syracuse, N. Y., a class organized with about ten, it began growing at once and at last reports one hundred

and forty-one men have been received into the church from that class alone. In New York City a class of six struggled along without growth. Immediately after organization new members began to come in and it now numbers over forty, and more than thirty of them have united with the church. In Auburn, N. Y., an unorganized class of forty effected an organization last fall. It now numbers one hundred and seventy. Organization and numerical growth appear to be synonymous.

Q.—When and how should a Bible class be organized ?

A.—“To-morrow, to-day will be yesterday. *Do it now.*” If you have a young men’s class not yet organized, organize it and go on. If you haven’t a class pick out the young men in or out of your congregation who have left the school because they were “too old”—call them together and propose the organization. Most of them will come in. Begin with five or three or one, but begin.

Q.—How shall we get a good teacher ?

A.—First, he should be eager to win souls to Christ. Second, he should know and love God’s Word. Third, he should be in sympathy with the characteristics of young manhood. Let the young men sign a written petition asking him to teach them. Few men could resist that. The class “calls” the teacher subject to the approval of the Advisory Committee.

Q.—If the teacher resigns does the class disband ?

A.—Numerous instances prove that it does not, but that the class calls a new teacher—as a church calls a new pastor to fill a vacant pulpit.

Q.—How much of a class organization is best ?

A.—The class should have a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. If a large class the secretary and treasurer may have assistants, or there may be both a recording and a corresponding secretary. Have committees for special work, and, if possible, have every member on some committee.

Q.—What is done with the class offering?

A.—In most classes one-half of the offering is given to the school treasury and the other half used for the necessary expenses of the class. As organization almost invariably increases the membership, the school treasury gains more from the half offering of the organized class than from the whole offering of the unorganized class.

Q.—What special lines of work auxiliary to Bible study should men's classes take up?

A.—A good general motto for the class would be "The other fellow." The physical and social needs of members should be looked after. Athletics appeal to young men. An employment committee might be exceedingly helpful. Cultivate a fraternal friendship between members. Let the spirit be inclusive but never exclusive. "The other fellow" means as well the young man who ought to be but is not in the class.

Q.—What should be done on the social side?

A.—Hold a class social every month or two months with games, music, and a regular program. At intervals invite ladies also to these socials. In some classes an annual banquet is the great social event of the year. Plan summer excursions or baseball games for Saturday afternoons. Keep them busy.

Q.—What is the most successful method of recruiting?

A.—First, promotion. Let the boys of the school know that at a certain age they are to be promoted into the organized class for young men and they will watch for it eagerly. Second, by inviting strangers to the socials and making it so pleasant that they will want to join the class. Third, by personal invitation of the members to friends both new and old, getting every new member to promise his best efforts to secure another member.

Q.—Should the class meet at the same time and place with the Sunday-school ?

A.—By all means, the hour and the place are most convenient for everybody. The class is a department of the school.

Q.—Should there be a constitution ?

A.—It is well to have a constitution framed to meet the especial requirements and environments of the class. A good general form is as follows:—

#### ARTICLE I

##### *Name*

The class shall be known as . . . . .

#### ARTICLE II

##### *Object*

The object of this class shall be to lead men to Jesus Christ and to teach them the Bible.

#### ARTICLE III

##### *Officers*

The officers of this class shall consist of a teacher, a



president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer. These five shall constitute an executive committee.

#### ARTICLE IV

##### *Members*

Any young man over the age of . . . . may become a member of this class by attending the class and signifying his desire to join. He shall then be entitled to all the privileges of the class so long as he complies with its rules and regulations.

#### ARTICLE V

##### *Meetings*

The class shall meet each Sunday at . . . M. for the study of the Bible. Regular business meetings shall be held on the first Monday of January, April, July, and October at 8 P. M. Special meetings may be called at any time by the president, teacher, or any five members, previous notice having been given one Sunday in the class. The regular meeting in January shall be the annual meeting, at which officers for the ensuing year shall be elected. At called or regular business meetings . . . . members shall constitute a quorum.

#### ARTICLE VI

##### *Committees*

The standing committees of this class shall consist of first, advisory, consisting of the pastor, superintendent, teacher, and president of the class; second, membership, to consist of three members; third, devotional, consisting of three members; fourth, reception, to consist of three or more members; fifth, entertainment, to consist of three or more members.

## ARTICLE VII

*Duties of Officers and Committees*

*Section 1.* The teacher shall have charge of the lesson. Officers and committee men must consult with him on all subjects pertaining to the class before taking decisive action. All committee appointments must be with his approval. He shall be ex-officio member of all committees.

*Section 2.* The president shall preside at all meetings of the class, give the notices and announcements each Sunday, and, in general, be the executive officer of the class. All committees will report to him and through him to the class. He shall be chairman of the executive committee.

*Section 3.* The vice-president shall perform the duties of the president in his absence, and render the president such assistance as is possible.

*Section 4.* The secretary shall have charge of the records of the class and the minutes of the meetings. He shall, each Sunday, give out attendance cards and collect them after they are signed. He shall keep an accurate record of attendance.

*Section 5.* The treasurer shall have charge of all the monies of the class and shall pay them out only on order signed by the president and countersigned by the secretary.

*Section 6.* The executive committee shall have general supervision of all work in connection with the class, shall devise ways and means of increasing the interest, attendance, and general welfare of the class.

*Section 7.* The membership committee shall look after

the members of the class and call on them when absent more than one Sunday. They shall also see to the getting of new members and may call on any member of the class for assistance.

*Section 8.* The devotional committee shall have charge of the spiritual welfare and work of the class.

*Section 9.* The reception committee shall see that every man attending the class or any of its functions receives a hearty welcome, and get strangers acquainted with each other and with the members. Every member of the class is expected to help.

*Section 10.* The entertainment committee shall provide music for the class, have charge of socials and any entertainments that may be given by the class.

## ARTICLE VIII

### *Amendments*

This constitution may be amended at a regular or called meeting of the class, by a two-thirds vote, provided that notice of same has been given in the class one regular meeting previous.

## CHAPTER III

### GRADING THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

*By Prof. Edward P. St. John*

No other single plan will help so much or in so many ways in the average school. Sunday-school gradation has been considered the fad of those who play at Sunday-school work, the luxury of the large and wealthy schools, the method of those who would substitute the cramming of the mind for the culture of the heart and the molding of the life. Doubtless there has been ground for such criticism of the plan in some quarters, but the idea has a far bigger and better meaning than any of these. It is really an attempt to do God's work in God's way, to do the right thing in the right way for every pupil in the school.

At the Sunday-school convention, or in other ways, we hear of a cradle roll which links even the babies to the school. We are told of certain lessons that are especially suited to the children who are not yet six years of age. We learn of an honor roll or system of rewards which is especially helpful with the children who have just left the primary department. We find a wide-awake, manly man recommended as the teacher for the class of troublesome fourteen-year-old boys. We are urged to make the most of the special opportunity to secure conversion

that comes between twelve and sixteen years of age. We hear reports of organized classes of young men or women that are bringing thousands of these young people into the schools where there were only dozens before the scheme was introduced. Every one of these plans is valuable and well worth advocating separately, but the graded Sunday-school really includes them all, and, while it will not bring them all at once, it will bring them to attention and greatly facilitate their adoption.

The graded school is a systematic scheme to provide that we may do the best possible work for each pupil in whatever stage of life he may be. It is an attempt at a wise codification of all the helpful rules and suggestions that come to us from varied experience, from child study, from the science of teaching, and from the systematic study of the Bible. It is an ordering of all the work of the school so that all these plans can be carried out without friction or interference, and without detracting from the unity of spirit and effort.

The authority for such a plan is abundant. The Sunday-school is the educational department of the church, and every educator stands as a champion of gradation. Every study of childhood indicates its value. Every systematic and progressive course of Bible study requires it. The laws of teaching make it essential, and the methods of teaching are adapted to it. If those who do not acknowledge the authority of educational principles in Sunday-school work will turn to the Bible, they will find its warrant there. Let such an one remember that the child thinks as a child, but that when he becomes a man he puts away childish things. Let him consider

that God's Word contains milk for babes and strong meat for those who are of full strength. Let him ponder over the fact that in the development of Christian character we find first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. Grading the Sunday-school is simply an attempt to deal wisely with these conditions—to do the best work for each pupil, whatever his needs may be.

The plan is practical and helpful in the small school.—If there are less than one hundred members there must be special adaptation, and usually some valuable features must be omitted, but any school will be helped by so much of gradation as can be introduced. In the past the great difficulty has been that schools have supposed they must adopt bodily the methods of the strong, elaborately graded school instead of adapting them to the altered conditions of village or country. When attention is centered not on the details of methods used, but on the reasons for which such plans are made, the superintendent of the small school will take courage and seek to accomplish the same end in another way. It is the purpose of this chapter to point out some of the fundamental principles of Sunday-school gradation, and to give some hints as to ways in which they may be applied.

Every Sunday-school is to some extent a graded school.—Gradation is not a new plan, but rather a perfecting of plans that are everywhere accepted and, to some extent, followed. So much may be said for the encouragement of those who dread innovations. That being the case, the plan may be carried out without revolutions. Every school that has more than one class has made a beginning

of gradation. And if its leaders believe that to abandon the classes and teach the school as a whole would be a backward step, they will be convinced by very little thought that any wise steps in the other direction are in the line of progress. It is by recognizing these facts, and by building on the foundations already laid, that satisfactory gradation is to be secured in the average school. But if these gradual changes are to be brought about, there must be some ideal toward which progress is to be made. And this ideal should set perfection before us without prescribing a uniform mode of approach toward its goal. This will be accomplished as we deal with principles rather than methods. The one fundamental law of gradation is that of adaptation, but this broad principle must be applied in at least four specific ways if the best results are to be obtained.

The first essential principle of the graded school is that the pupils must be graded.—That is, they must be so grouped that only those who need substantially the same kind of teaching and of discipline are placed under the care of any one teacher. This principle of gradation is more largely followed than any other to-day, and yet there is opportunity and need for much improvement in this particular. The usual division into classes narrows the responsibility of the teacher, enables him to make the instruction more personal, and encourages the formation of social ties among the pupils that strengthen the influence of the school. But if these classes can be made up of pupils who have the same interests and about the same knowledge, who are engaged in the same forms of play and the same lines of study,

who have to meet the same temptations and are passing through similar phases of religious experience, there is still more of gain. The teacher's work is more closely defined, practically all the teaching may come with a personal appeal to every member, and the influence of class fellowship will be greatly strengthened.

At first thought such a grouping of pupils would seem to require supernatural knowledge on the part of superintendent, or endless experimentation; but, in fact, the problem is quite simple, for nature has graded our pupils. Careful studies of children and youth have clearly shown that as the child develops he passes through a succession of stages or periods, usually lasting from two to four years each, during which the changes in his nature are not great, but which are divided from each other by short periods in which development is very rapid and in which new powers and interests come into prominence. It is also found that all normal children who are in the same development-period tend to think, feel, and act in the same general way in the most important particulars. The age of the pupils, then, will serve as a fairly accurate guide as to proper gradation. There will be individual exceptions to the rule, because some children develop more rapidly than others, but when the peculiar characteristics of the various periods are known, it is easy to correct errors due to this. What these development-stages are will be indicated later in this chapter. For each of them there should be a corresponding department of the school.

The second principle is that the teachers must be graded.—When the pupils have been graded as indicated



above, it will be found that certain traits are characteristic of all the members of a class. The teacher should be selected because of fitness to deal successfully with these characteristics, and should permanently teach pupils of that stage in development. This, again, is but a further application of an accepted method. This peculiar fitness usually guides in the selection of a teacher for any class, but when the wise adjustment has been made it cannot be permanent, for while the adult teacher will remain practically the same, the pupils will in a few years pass into a new stage of life and new and very divergent traits will appear. The only way to follow the mandate of this principle and gain its practical benefits is by changing the teacher of any particular group of pupils every three or four years. This is contrary to the established traditions of many schools, but it is wise for several reasons. (1) No teacher can do equally good work in any two departments of the school. When we find the type of pupils which he can most successfully teach and keep him with them, we strengthen the teaching power of the school. Many poor teachers of to-day were good teachers when they were assigned to their classes, and would be good teachers to-day if they were teaching pupils of that younger grade. (2) If the teacher remains long with a class, she must wholly change her methods from time to time if she achieves success; but if she always teaches pupils who are of one particular type, every year of service brings added skill in meeting one particular set of problems. (3) The best thing that any teacher can give to a class is the message that comes in her own Christian character. No one can give his

best to a class in one year when he meets it only one hour a week, but it can be done in three years or four. Any pupil will gain more from association with five strong Christian personalities of different types during twenty years of Sunday-school life than from the long association with only one.

The third principle is that the lessons must be graded.— Its importance is fully realized by those who most strenuously urge that there should be a uniform lesson throughout the school. Their contention is not that adaptation is undesirable, but that it can be accomplished by varying the choice of illustration, the placing of emphasis, method of presentation, etc. Such grading of the lesson treatment is suggested by the various graded lesson helps, often with remarkable ingenuity and helpfulness. But the teacher's problems will be greatly simplified when the lesson itself is selected in view of its intrinsic suitability for pupils of a particular grade. An excellent illustration of this we find in the International Beginners' Course, which was prepared for use with children under six years of age. Those who teach these lessons find that they are more interesting and more profitable for their little pupils, and much easier to teach. The time is not far distant when we shall have lessons especially suited to each of the important departments of the Sunday-school. But, while several valuable experiments in this line have been made, we have to-day no really ideal graded courses for all departments of the school. And probably the very large majority of those who read this article are not satisfied that such courses are desirable. To such, two

plans are open which will enable them to use the uniform lesson and yet make substantial progress toward the ideal which this principle presents.

First, graded supplemental lessons may be introduced.—Where this is done the time of the lesson period is divided between the International lesson and certain other lessons which are carefully adapted to the comprehension, interests, and needs of the pupils to whom they are taught. This plan is especially suited to the pupils who are under eighteen or perhaps sixteen years of age. In most primary departments such instruction is now given, and where junior departments exist it is almost universal. The information which these courses contain is of great value to the pupils. Those who desire definite suggestions as to the nature of such courses can find them in a leaflet on "Graded Supplemental Lessons for the Elementary Departments of the Sunday-school," which is published by the International Sunday-school Association, and may be obtained from Marion Lawrance, Chicago, Ill., by making application and enclosing a two-cent stamp.

The second step toward fully graded lessons is that of introducing one or several "elective courses" in the higher departments of the school. The suggestion is that some competent teacher be asked to prepare herself or himself to teach some special course of Bible study which would present new views of Bible truth to those who have been for ten or fifteen years following the International lessons. This course may be based upon some published book, or may be planned by the teacher. "The Great Painters' Gospel," issued by the publishers

of this volume, is a course especially suited to a class of intelligent young men or women or of cultured adults. This course of picture study might be made of fascinating interest and very great profit by the Christian teacher who has some intelligent interest in art. A score of other suitable courses could readily be found. When the teacher has completed this course with her class, some other class should be permitted to "elect" this course. The teacher will have profited by the experience of last year, will read one or two new books in the line of her topic, and by added experience will fit herself for still better work the third year. So a school may develop one or several specialists in particular lines of Bible study, to whom various classes may go in turn.

The fourth principle is that the school must be organized by grades or departments.—This provides such regular plans as will make it possible to carry out readily the suggestions already outlined. It involves at least three items. (1) All the work for pupils in one stage of development should be under the supervision of one person known as the superintendent of the department. This secures leadership and training of each group of teachers who have common problems to face by the most competent person among them. That person may help in that way to determine the policy of the department in its dealing with its members, and secure unity of effort. Such an officer would discover and introduce into the department valuable plans in use in other schools, etc. (2) This also involves regular promotion from department to department. This should be on the basis of development rather than intellectual attainment. Ordinarily,

promotion should take place on one specified day of the year. On that day one or more classes made up of all those who have passed the established age limits should be promoted from each department except the highest. (3) Each teacher should be assigned to the department to which he seems best suited, and should permanently remain there. When a class enters a department it should be given a teacher who will remain with it until it is promoted to the next higher department, when he will again take a class that is just entering from below.

The important periods in development and the departments of the graded school which correspond with them, with the usual age limits for each, are indicated below. Two facts in regard to the development of the pupil should, however, be kept in mind. (1) The different stages blend into each other so gradually that no observer, however expert, could say of a child that he is one week in one stage and the next week in another. But a few months usually suffice to clearly show that the transition has come. (2) Different children vary somewhat as to the ages at which the transitions take place. The variation, however, is not very great in the periods that are passed before the twelfth year. The ages indicated below are determined upon after special studies of childhood, the comparison of many authorities, and observation of the practical workings of a very large number of Sunday-schools. It is believed that they are as nearly correct as the present knowledge of child development permits us to make them.

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PERIOD OF DEVELOPMENT.	DEPARTMENTS OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL.	AGE FOR PROMOTION TO NEXT DEPARTMENT.
Infancy.	Cradle Roll.	4
Early Childhood.	Kindergarten or Beginners.	6
	Primary.	8
Prepubescence, or Boyhood and Girlhood.	Junior.	12
Adolescence: First Stage.	Intermediate.	16
Adolescence: Middle Stage.	Senior.	18
Adolescence: Last Stage.	Adult or Assembly.	
Adult Life.		

The Cradle Roll Department is the first in the completely graded school.—It makes no provision for the instruction of its members, but enrolls their names and thus links them to the school and insures their presence as soon as they are old enough to enter the Kindergarten or Beginners' Department. The influence of the department is strengthened by sending cards to its members on their birthdays, by special gatherings which the mothers attend, etc. Most of the Sunday-school supply houses furnish the simple material needed for carrying on the work. It is sometimes under the care of the superintendent of the Beginners' or Primary Department, and sometimes has its separate superintendent.

The Kindergarten or Beginners' Department is next in order, and cares for the children between four and six

years of age. Its work is greatly facilitated if it can be carried on in a separate room, but it may be successfully carried on if its members take part in the same general exercises as the slightly older children, but are separated for the lesson study. The International Beginners' Course is a special course designed especially for children of this age, and covering two years of time. It is much better suited to their comprehension and their spiritual needs than the uniform lessons. Marching and other exercises should be introduced, and much of freedom in movement and speech should be permitted. The discipline should be that of the home rather than that of the school. The "circle work" (not the gifts or occupations) of the ordinary kindergarten will offer much of suggestion as to the general conduct of the department.

The Primary Department, so well organized in most schools, needs little more than mention here. The most common error is in the retention of children in this department after they have passed the proper age limits. Those who are over eight, or at most nine, years of age should be promoted to the next higher department. The International Beginners' Course is much better adapted to this grade than the uniform lesson, and may profitably be used, especially if there is no Beginners' Department. But, whichever course is used, graded supplemental lessons should be added, from one-fourth to one-half of the lesson period being given to them.

The Junior Department includes the children between eight and about twelve years of age.—The general conduct and organization may be similar to that of the Primary Department, but all the exercises should be

adapted to the child's further intellectual development and matter-of-fact spirit. It is now wise to put boys and girls in separate classes, and usually a teacher of the same sex will be more successful. Rewards, honor rolls, etc., are of greater value now than at any other time, but should be carefully used. In the teaching of the lessons map drawing is of especial interest and value. The Bible stories should be grouped according to historical periods, and pupils should be trained to the use of the book itself.

The Intermediate Department is one of the most difficult and one of the most important in the school.—But in the well-graded school its problems are greatly simplified. Its pupils, who are between twelve and sixteen years of age, are, as the department name signifies, in the transition between childhood and young manhood and womanhood. The self-assertion and rebellion against authority that are common now are due to the dawning of the consciousness of selfhood—of the power to think and choose and act independently. It is best corrected by placing responsibility upon them. Self-government is the most successful plan to correct the common disorders. Rules which they make themselves they will obey and enforce. The love of a joke is very strong, and the teacher whose sense of humor is well developed has a great advantage over others. This is above all others the time of cliques and sets among the girls and gangs among the boys. The evil tendencies of these associations may be checked, and the impulses which lead to such exclusive fellowships may be called to the aid of the teacher by organizing the class in a very simple way.



The spirit of hero-worship is very strong and explains the interest in the "dime novel," the prize-fighter, and the military leader. Because of this interest, biographical Bible study is especially valuable, and illustrations from the lives of successful or unsuccessful men are valuable for inspiration or warning. The ideal teacher for the boys is the manly man; for the girls, the motherly woman. It should be remembered that a very large proportion of all conversions occur during these years, and there should be patient and tactful effort to lead the pupil into a conscious personal religious experience.

The Senior Department seeks to make provision for the changes that come between sixteen and eighteen or nineteen years of age. Now, unselfishness should rapidly develop, and both instruction and activities to which the young people may be guided should be used to aid in the development of these altruistic tendencies. The studies may well center in the life and teachings of Christ, and there should be special effort to deepen and enrich the religious life. Often a teacher of the other sex has especial influence over the pupil of this age.

The Adult Department includes those who are in the last stage of adolescence as well as those who have reached maturity.—The period between eighteen and thirty is preëminently that of the organized class. In spite of the general complaint that young men do not attend the Sunday-school, it is becoming common to find classes that number several hundred in the cities, and in New York State there are a considerable number of schools that number about one hundred, and have one-fifth or one-fourth of their membership in a single

class of young men. These are classes that through organization have utilized the energy and enthusiasm of the young men themselves. Space forbids a discussion of their methods, but information concerning classes for men may be obtained of Mr. M. A. Hudson, Syracuse, N. Y.; and concerning classes for young women from David C. Cook, Elgin, Ill.

To the superintendent of the small school, a further word.—Do not let the ideal which you cannot now attain be of no avail to you. Work toward it as you can. If you can have one class for each department, you can have a graded school if it meets all in the one room of a schoolhouse. If only one teacher is willing that you should grade her class, *grade that one*. Grade others when you can. If you have a Primary Department only, plan to add the Junior. Be willing to make progress one step at a time. If your teachers do not see the value of the plan, educate them until they do. If discouragements come,

“Bustle up, an’ grit your teeth,  
An’ keep on keepin’ on.”

## CHAPTER IV

### GRADED SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS

In the last chapter Professor St. John gave his ideas with regard to a graded Sunday-school. These were so excellent that Dr. Peloubet, than whom there is no better judge, wrote us that the suggestions were the best that he had ever seen. There are many schools in the land that might well take Professor St. John's suggestions and carry them out so far as their circumstances permit. In our own school we have long had a graded system at work. Our gradations are (1) A preparatory class for the very little ones who first come to the school. (2) A younger primary class. (3) A primary class of rather older scholars. (4) An intermediate A, into which those from the older primary pass. (5) An Intermediate Department constituting part of the main school. (All classes below this meet by themselves for all their work.) (6) A Junior Department. (7) A Senior Department. These two latter meet in the same room with the intermediate classes, and join in devotional services and in the review. With us this division of the school has worked well.

In this chapter we will take the question of the *graded lesson*. Much criticism has been indulged in with regard to the lack of a graded system in the International lessons. It is claimed that good work is im-

possible where all classes study the same portion of Scripture. That there is some truth in these criticisms, no one will deny. No system of instruction in Sunday-school is, or can be, perfect. The only question to be considered is what system yields *on the whole* the best results. For a right decision in this important matter, it may help us to consider carefully the conditions as they now exist. In doing this, let it be clearly understood that we make no reference to those schools that adopt the catechetical system, or that have the Union Bible Study set of lessons. Our reference is to that vast majority of schools that adhere to the International system.

From 1872 to 1909, a period of thirty-seven years, these schools have had the "Uniform Lesson." That is, all classes have studied the same portion of Scripture each Sunday. Of course, critics have not been lacking, but on the whole this system has been an advance on any that preceded it. There has been improvement in the selection of lessons, as experience has shown the way, so that of late years the more difficult passages of Scripture have been avoided, and the simpler ones selected. But in spite of this, many have held that there was a more excellent way. True, in the "Lesson Helps" an effort has been made by all the publishing houses to adapt the lesson chosen to various grades of scholars. This has been very successfully done in many instances. And in many lessons it can be accomplished quite perfectly. For example, in a lesson on the Decalogue, one lesson help might well call attention to what the Ten Commandments mean, while a help for senior classes might call attention

to the likenesses and differences between the Decalogue and the recently discovered Code of Hammurabi. Or in a lesson on Elijah at Mount Carmel, the lesson for the younger scholars might hold to the simple story and its teachings for us, while the help for seniors might pass on to discuss the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth, as the gods representing the reproductive powers of nature, and the result of all such false worship. As a result of long experience in teaching teachers, the writer holds that in the vast majority of lessons this can be done with good effect. The testimony of a large number of primary teachers points in the same direction. Still, there are many who do not agree with us in this matter, they claiming that better work can be done if the lessons are selected with especial reference to the ages of those taught.

This dissatisfaction with the uniform lesson found strong expression at the Triennial International Sunday-school Convention held in the city of Denver in 1902. The leaders among the primary teachers the land over petitioned for an especial two years' course for beginners, ranging up to six years of age. They wanted simpler lesson texts selected, and wanted them so arranged as to fit the development of the child. As a result, the Lesson Committee prepared such a set of lessons, for a two years' course, this course to be gone over again and again with the little scholars. This Beginners' Course has received much praise. Indeed, so far as we know, it has met with no adverse criticism. The publishers have issued helps based on this set of lessons, prepared by the best workers among the children in the land.

At the Denver Convention above referred to, an Advanced Course was also presented by the Lesson Committee, but was rejected by the Convention. Since then, there has been a cry made for an Advanced Course, and the action of the Denver Convention has been severely criticised. Those who wish such an Advanced Course admit that the majority of Sunday-schools are not ready yet for such a course. But they claim that at least twenty-five per cent. of the schools are ready for such a course, and that for their sakes it should be provided.

Others, however, claim that the adoption by the International Committee of an Advanced Course would not go far enough. They want much more of subdivision in the grading of lessons than that involved in a Beginners' Course, an Intermediate Course, and an Advanced Course. Such persons would have five or six grades, in each of which the lesson text was different from that of all the other grades. This they claim could be accomplished by supplemental lessons, possibly, but not as well as by having separate lessons for each grade. With regard to the matter of supplemental lessons, it seems to us that little can be accomplished in this way. *The time is too short.* You cannot do much more in the half hour that most teachers have, than mark the roll, take the collection, hear the memory verses, and teach the lesson. To try to do more, is to do less well all that you do.

Before adopting any such course as that involved in separate lessons for each grade in the school, it seems to us that it would be well to consider carefully the *actual conditions* under which Sunday-school work has to be done. In doing this we should not have in mind

certain exceptional schools, where careful grading both of classes and of matter is possible. That there are a few such schools is true. But what we must consider in ministering to the Sunday-school constituency is the vast majority of schools. Among the things to be considered in our judgment are the following :—

The vast majority of Sunday-school teachers in our land are not trained pedagogues. In fact, most of them have no higher education than that of the grammar school. Very few are high school graduates. For such teachers to perceive the fine difference between grades of teaching, is not to be expected. If grades of lessons were prepared for each graded class they would not be able to make a right pedagogic use of them. Indeed, it is in just this unpreparedness of the majority of the teacher-force that the great difficulty of all Sunday-school work lies. It is here that the vital necessity of the teachers' meeting appears. They need a trained mind to prepare them for the work in hand, and, in doing this, the leader has to so simplify matters that the teacher may be able to first grasp and then present the truth to her class. Every anxious superintendent knows that his great difficulty is to secure teachers who have even slight ability in the line of teaching. If, then, not only we are to have graded classes, but also graded lesson material, we shall have even more difficulty in putting the right teachers in the right places.

Still another difficulty arises as we face the actual conditions of our work. In New York City, for example, it has been found as the result of actual canvass, that the life of the teacher, as teacher, is only four years. That

is, at the end of each four years, the school finds itself with a *new corps of teachers*. This does not mean that every teacher is new to the school, for some hold over for a longer time, and a few remain for a long series of years. On the other hand, many do not continue for a whole year. In my own school, which is supposed to be above the average, we change teachers on the whole once every four years. The writer has had investigations made in various places in the Empire State, with the result that the period of the single teacher is slightly longer than that in the city of New York. Still, even in the quieter rural districts it is appallingly short. This is an insuperable difficulty in the way of much of our work. What could we not accomplish if only our teachers were permanent, as are teachers in our public schools. And, per contra, what havoc would be wrought in our public schools if every four years the whole corps of teachers were to be changed.

On account, then, of our not being able to secure trained teachers in any considerable numbers, and of the further fact that they do not remain with us long enough to train them adequately, it is easy to see that much which is theoretically desirable is practically not attainable. Even in a Sunday-school where they have a good teachers' meeting in which the manner as well as the matter of teaching is carefully studied, and where the leader is an unusually clever teacher, the goal in view cannot be reached, since the teachers do not all come to the teachers' meeting, and those who do come, are not there for a sufficient length of time to be adequately prepared for their work. In speaking of these things,



we are not speaking theoretically, but out of a long and painful experience.

We wish that these were all the difficulties of the actual situation. But they are not. A still more radical difficulty is to be found in the fact that in most Sunday-schools there is no one capable of taking charge of the teachers' meeting. The result is that the vast majority of the Sunday-schools have no teachers' meeting for the study of the lesson. Teachers have to do the best they can with their "Helps" to fit themselves to meet their classes. Until this fundamental difficulty is removed, it is useless to expect the best work from our teachers under any conditions. At a recent State Sunday-school Convention of the state of New York, the writer conducted a "Round Table" for the pastors present. There were thirty-seven of these who came. Presumably they were deeply interested in Sunday-school matters or they would not have attended the convention at all. For it is a sad fact that the majority of our pastors think so little of the Sunday-school that they never attend such gatherings. To these thirty-seven the question was put, "How many of you have a regular teachers' meeting?" Only three of them replied in the affirmative. This was a sad showing. Some of them said they had tried, but for various reasons had abandoned the attempt. Of all the pastors in the city of New York, the writer knows of but few who even try to lead their teachers to better things in the line of improved teaching.

That this state of affairs is widespread is evident from the following fact. When the first call was sent out by the Religious Education Association for a convention,

based on the alleged fact that the International Convention had not provided for an Advanced Course, and claiming that such a course was essential to the best Sunday-school work, it was signed among others by seventy-six settled pastors, from all over our land. The writer was anxious to know how earnestly these pastors were engaged in preparing their teachers for their work along present lines. As a result of personal inquiries made by him, replies were received from sixty of these pastors. Of these, *only thirteen* had any teachers' meetings for the study of the lesson, while *forty-seven* of them were, on their own confession, making no effort to prepare their teachers for good work at the present time. Exactly what was in the minds of such men when they signed a call for a convention, which was to outline work in some respects *more difficult*, it is hard to see.

For it is evident that the more minutely the lessons are graded, the more difficult, not to say impossible, will it be to have the teachers' meetings. If the average pastor cannot sustain one teachers' meeting, how will he be able to maintain several each week? Indeed, the men are exceedingly rare who could teach several grades of lessons with any degree of distinctness, so that teachers would see the difference between grade and grade in the handling of the text. It is not an easy matter to accomplish, as the writer well knows by long experience. The fact is that the multitudinous grading of lessons will result in a diminishing number of teachers' meetings all over the land. Of this, there can be no question.

One more fact must be considered in this matter of minute grading,—and that is that in every school substi-

tute teachers have to be made use of on almost every Sunday of the year. Sometimes these substitute teachers are almost as numerous as the regular corps. (We refer to the summer time, in city schools.) These substitute teachers would find it hard, not to say impossible, to suit their teaching to the grade of lesson handled. They would inevitably fall back on the usual methods of teaching with which they had been familiar.

What then?—Are we opposed to graded lessons? No. But the gradation must not be too minute and must be very gradually introduced. At present it is the impression of the writer that a Beginners' Course is a necessity, in spite of the fact alluded to above that only a small percentage of Primary teachers use the one presented. It is his impression that this course (now called the Beginners' Course, and confined to scholars under six years of age) is well adapted to the Primary scholars up to ten years of age. Taking the Sunday-schools at large, it is a fact that the teachers of the primaries are, on the whole, the most capable of all the teachers. Very frequently they are public school teachers who know how. For them, then, there is not the same imperative necessity for a weekly teachers' meeting. They are able to prepare for their work with the usual "Lesson Helps." And if they do need help, in many of the larger towns they have their own Primary Unions where the lesson is taught, and various hints are given in the line of black-board work and object-lessons.

Then for the main school, comprising scholars from eleven to sixteen years of age, the regular uniform lesson may well be used. These lessons for the past ten years

have been chosen with unusual care and are largely biographic in their nature. Any teacher who will take the trouble to look over the lessons from 1900 to 1909, inclusive, will see that really difficult lesson material has rarely been selected. Taking the ten years' course as a whole, the vast majority of the lessons have been grouped around the names of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Ezra, Nehemiah for the Old Testament, and Jesus, Peter, and Paul for the New Testament. Such a series of lessons is easy enough for scholars of the ages eleven to fourteen, and not too easy for those of the ages of fifteen to sixteen or seventeen. For teachers of these classes, then, a regular weekly teachers' meeting should be sustained, where the best methods could be used, and the teachers be prepared for serious work with their classes.

Then for the adult classes we ought to have an Advanced Course. This course might be either (tentatively) a two years' course, or it might be like that for the main school, a six years' course. Our own preference would be to start with a two years' course, and then as a result of more experience, enlarge it to a six years' course. Beyond this the writer does not believe that the Sunday-schools of the land could go with profit for quite a number of years to come. To prepare at the present time an elaborate set of courses, would be to confuse the teachers and lead to no good result. "*Festina lente*" (make haste slowly) is a good motto when those involved in any action are many. And in the case of the International Sunday-school work, we must ever bear in mind that we

are working not for thousands, but for *millions* of scholars. In this case the proverb "more haste, less speed," holds true. Our consideration of this most important theme will not be complete without bringing the whole question at issue up to date. This will be done in the next chapter, for which we crave a most careful perusal.

## CHAPTER V

### GRADED LESSONS

In continuation of the subject discussed in the last chapter, we must now add further as follows. At the International Sunday-school Convention in Toronto, in 1905, the Lesson Committee was instructed to prepare lessons for advanced classes. This the committee did, preparing three such courses, each to occupy one year.<sup>1</sup> Agitation for a complete graded course for the whole Sunday-school, however, continued. It was claimed that there were twenty-five per cent. of the schools of the United States that desired, and were able to use, such a course. As a result at the International Sunday-school Convention in Louisville held in 1908, the Lesson Committee was instructed to go forward and prepare such a complete graded course.

As a result of their labors, the Lesson Committee has issued the following statement, and an outline of a thoroughly graded course of lessons. It has also furnished to the publishers a complete course for the first year Beginner, the first year Primary and the first year Junior. In October, 1909, these lessons will be ready for all who desire to make use of them.

### FOREWORD

The Twelfth International Sunday-school Convention

<sup>1</sup> There has been almost no call for these courses, and no more will be issued at present.

held at Louisville, Ky., June 20, 1908, instructed the Lesson Committee "to continue the preparation of a thoroughly graded course of lessons, which may be used by any Sunday-school which desires it, whether in whole or in part." The Lesson Committee had already been in correspondence with an important group of Elementary Workers, who had begun the construction of a scheme of graded lessons. The results of their prolonged and arduous work were put at the disposal of the Lesson Committee, thus placing the Lesson Committee and the Sunday-school world under a great obligation.

The Lesson Committee, through a special sub-committee, have given close scrutiny to every feature of the scheme, and have held frequent conferences with the group of workers referred to. Further, a draft copy of the scheme, so far as prepared, was sent out to more than seventy specialists in Sunday-school work all over the United States and Canada. A large part of these returned valuable criticisms, both on the general principles of the scheme and on innumerable details, criticisms which were often interestingly divergent. It need not be said that no labor has been spared to give due consideration to every suggestion from every quarter.

The committee could not be expected to complete in so brief a time what must be the work of several years. It was decided, therefore, to issue in January, 1909, the First Year's Lessons for the first three departments, with a list of the proposed themes for the following years in those departments. It is hoped that before the end of 1909 the lessons for the second year in each of those departments will be completed. Work on the In-

intermediate grades will be undertaken immediately, and the results issued as soon as possible.

## INTRODUCTION

### I. THE PURPOSE OF THE GRADED LESSONS:

To meet the spiritual needs of the pupil in each stage of his development.

The spiritual needs broadly stated are these:

1. To know God as he has revealed himself to us in nature, in the heart of man, and in Christ.
2. To exercise toward God, the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, trust, obedience and worship.
3. To know and do our duty to others.
4. To know and do our duty to ourselves.

### II. THE MATERIAL CHOSEN FOR THESE LESSONS:

The truths are presented in lessons from the Bible, and are illustrated by lessons from nature, from the history of missions, and from the temperance and other humane movements.

### III. THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COURSES:

#### 1. *General Statements.*

The International Lesson Committee has been instructed "to continue the preparation of a thoroughly graded course of lessons" for the Sunday-school. In pursuance of this instruction a general scheme of lessons is in preparation for all departments of the Sunday-school. The departments recognized by the International Sunday-school Association are Beginners (ages un-



der six), Primary (ages 6-8), Junior (ages 9-12), Intermediate (ages 13-16), Senior (ages 17-20), Advanced (ages 21+).

Fifty-two lessons are provided for each year. The courses are planned for about nine months, in harmony with the ordinary public school year, in order that schools open during this period only may not have an incomplete scheme of study.

The lessons for the remaining three months, while not essential to complete the aim for the year, are valuable in themselves, and either supplement the work of the current year or else prepare for that of the following year.

The titles of the lessons in the Beginners' and Primary Courses are mainly simple story titles. In the Junior Course, whenever possible, a name and an event have been associated in the title as an aid to memory. Throughout the courses, preference in most cases is given to such titles as have been made familiar in literature and art.

So far as possible the well-known form wrought out in the Uniform Lessons has been preserved in the Graded Lesson scheme. It includes the title, the Scripture lesson as a whole, the portion which the pupil is expected to prepare specifically, and the verse for the child, memory verse, or text.

The knowledge already in the possession of the pupil through his day-school work has been taken into consideration in planning these courses; and the natural abilities of the average pupil have governed the selection of the memory texts.

It will be seen that these lessons, being arranged in units of one year each, can be adjusted to any plan of departmental classification; but an effort has been made to adapt each year's work to the interests, capacities and needs of the pupils of that year.

2. *Specific Statements.*

(a) *Beginners' and Primary Courses.*

The lessons are arranged in groups under successive themes, which are related in thought.

In selecting the material for these lessons, historical order has not been observed, but each passage has been chosen for the truth it contains, and for the value of that truth in the spiritual nurture of the child.

Large use of the method of repetition has been made in the construction of these courses. Not only do children love the retelling of stories, but that process is essential for impressing truth upon their minds. Hence, in the Beginners' Course frequent opportunities are given for the retelling of stories. In the Primary Course provision is generally made at the close of each theme for a review of the main teaching which it contains, under the title of "Review," or "Generalization." There the retelling of stories under a given theme can be freely used.

(b) *The Junior Course.*

It is important in constructing a course of moral and religious education to remember that important crises occur in the physical, mental and moral development of the individual, in his progress from childhood toward adult life. The most prominent crises occur about the ages of thirteen and sixteen or seventeen. Each of these

represents the close of one and the beginning of a new period. An attempt has been made in the arrangement of the Junior Course to keep this first crisis in view, and to prepare for it by appropriate studies and by the awakening of those desires, thoughts, volitions, and habits which will lead to the decision to enter upon the love and service of Christ.

During the first two years, when the historical sense begins to grow, the instruction is given by means of stories chronologically arranged, taken from various periods. The studies of the last two years will be based upon successive narratives of a continuous, though not necessarily complete, history.

The only exception to this chronological arrangement will be in the third year, when a topical course on temperance is introduced, in order that this subject may receive special attention at this critical period.

As this is a strong memory period, many Psalms and other connected passages of Scripture are prescribed for memorizing. In those cases the thought of the entire memory passage is similar to that of the group of lessons with which it is associated. Under this arrangement it is impossible that the memory text shall in every instance embody the truth of the particular lesson to which it is attached.

The geography of Bible lands is introduced into this course at the end of the first year, that being the period when it appears in the day-school course. Through the geographical setting given in the Exodus lessons, it is hoped to awaken the interest of the pupil in Bible lands.

#### IV. CORRELATED WORK:

(1) The Lesson Committee has not been instructed to provide for correlated work. It is not to be assumed, however, that the following courses of lessons exhaust the material which ought to be used in the religious education of the young. (2) It should be constantly kept in mind that a religious atmosphere in the Sunday-school helps to enforce the meaning and purpose of the entire course of teaching. Hence, the constant need for keeping the whole tone of the school, in the conduct of business, as well as the devotional exercises, in harmony with the religious spirit and purpose of the lessons. The spirit and bearing of the officers and teachers in the whole conduct of the school are among the educational forces of the school, and ought to produce in the pupil reverence in worship and to bring home to his heart and conscience the divine message. (3) The various denominations may desire to prepare supplemental lessons connected with their distinctive histories, doctrines and customs. It is of the utmost importance that care should be taken to introduce these at the appropriate periods, relating them as far as possible with the method of the entire course. When it is desired to have forms of prayer and historic hymns memorized, or a church catechism taught, or systematized forms of Christlike service pursued, these, too, should be so correlated with the aims and method of the successive courses as to form one consistent scheme of education which shall stimulate the pupil's interest, quicken his memory, and guide him into habits of faith, worship, and service.

**GRADED SERIES: BEGINNERS' COURSE**

(Approximate ages of pupils : Four and five years.)

**AIM OF THE COURSE**

*To Lead the Little Child to the Father*

*By Helping Him :*

1. To know God, the heavenly Father, who loves him, provides for, and protects him.
2. To know Jesus the Son of God, who became a little child, who went about doing good, and who is the friend and Saviour of little children.
3. To know about the heavenly home.
4. To distinguish between right and wrong.
5. To show his love for God by working with him and for others.

NOTE.—The Bible verses for the children are chosen for their simple statement of the truth taught, and are not given as mere memory work, but simply to be used often by the teacher, so that they shall sink into the children's minds and unconsciously become their possession.

**GRADED SERIES : PRIMARY COURSE**

(Grades 1, 2 and 3. Approximate ages : Six, seven and eight years.)

**AIM OF THE COURSE**

*To Lead the Child to Know the Heavenly Father, and to Inspire within Him a Desire to Live as God's Child :*

1. To show forth God's power, love, and care, and to awaken within the child responsive love, trust and obedience.
2. To build upon the teachings of the first year, (1) by showing ways in which children may express their love, trust and obedience ; (2) by showing Jesus the Saviour, in his love and work for men ; and (3) by showing how helpers of Jesus and others learn to do God's will.

3. To build upon the work of the first and second years by telling (1) about people who chose to do God's will ; (2) how Jesus, by his life and words, death and resurrection, revealed the Father's love and will for us ; (3) such stories as will make a strong appeal to the child and arouse within him a desire to choose and to do that which God requires of him.

#### GRADED SERIES: JUNIOR COURSE

(Grades 4-7. Approximate ages : Nine, ten, eleven and twelve.)

##### AIM OF THE COURSE

1. To awaken an interest in the Bible, and love for it ; to deepen the impulse to choose and to do right.

2. To present the ideal of moral heroism ; to reveal the power and majesty of Jesus Christ, and to show his followers going forth in his strength to do his work.

3. To deepen the sense of responsibility for right choices ; to show the consequences of right and wrong choices ; to strengthen love of the right and hatred of the wrong.

4. To present Jesus as our example and Saviour ; to lead the pupil to appreciate his opportunities for service, and to give him a vision of what it means to be a Christian.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TEACHERS' MEETING

*By Mr. Marion Lawrance, General Secretary of the International Sunday-school Convention*

First of all have a teachers' meeting.—It is quite impossible to fully estimate the value of a properly conducted teachers' meeting. Certainly all Christians are agreed that the Sunday-school is the most fertile field the church can possibly cultivate. This is because it is easier to win children to the kingdom of God than it is to win adults. Not only that, but they are much more valuable in Christian service when they begin in their youth. Fully four-fifths of those who join our churches by conversion, both in this country and England, have come through the Sunday-school. Some one has said, and wisely so, that when it comes to winning souls for God in the Sunday-school, "The pastor is across the street, the superintendent is at arm's length, but the teacher is *face to face*." The teacher has the place of greatest opportunity. In view of these facts, can anything be more important than training the teachers in the art, not only of teaching, but of soul winning? Only about one church in thirty-three in the United States and Canada has a teachers' meeting, and yet no service of the church, not even the Sunday preaching service, bears a more vital relation to the permanent growth and strength of the church than does the teachers' meeting. It will take

determination, work, perseverance, push, and prayer, but it is worth more than it costs. *Have a teachers' meeting!*

The real purpose of the teachers' meeting.—A failure on the part of many to fully comprehend its importance is the reason for the great apathy concerning it in many quarters. No superintendent who fully realizes its real purpose and value will willingly do without it. First, let me say that the name is in some respects a handicap. The true teachers' meeting is not any more for the teachers than it is for the officers, and for several other classes of people whom we shall name later. It is for the purpose of helping all those who have anything to do with the management of the Sunday-school, whether officers, teachers, or helpers. Of course the most of the time should be given to the consideration of the lesson for the following Sunday, and yet this meeting is not so much to study the *lesson* as to study the *methods* of presenting the lesson. We have many valuable lesson helps which throw light upon the lessons, and give us more than we can possibly teach. The teachers' meeting, however, will enable the teachers to help each other, by giving them the benefit of each others' ideas. It will tend to unify the teaching in the school, and this is important. There should be ample time given, also, for the consideration of anything that has to do with the management of the school, including the duties of all the officers. Discussions concerning the grading of the school, the library, the preparations for Christmas, Easter, etc., and, indeed, anything else which has to do with the welfare of the school, are as appropriate at the teachers' meeting as the treatment of the lesson. Help should be rendered



where help is needed, and when all the officers, as well as the teachers, learn that they *get something* at the teachers' meeting which will help them in their particular work, they will be more likely to attend. The teachers' meeting enables the school to concentrate on the weak places. I am not sure but "The Weekly Sunday-school Council" would be a better name than "Teachers' Meeting."

When and where shall it be held?—If possible, always have a fixed night and always meet at the church. The advantages of meeting at the church are numerous. Those who are absent from the teachers' meeting will know exactly when and where it is to meet the following week. Then you have the conveniences for the meeting, such as a blackboard, etc., which you do not have in a private house. It is far better to give a whole evening to it, and this will be found quite little enough time when its real value is understood. A teachers' meeting tacked on before or after another meeting, while a great deal better than none, falls far below its possibilities. As to the best time in the week, we favor Friday night (if it does not conflict with the prayer-meeting), for the reason that it is nearer Sunday. The teachers will have had time to study the lesson, and consequently their exchange of views will make the meeting brighter and more helpful to each other. However, any night in the week, provided you can have the whole evening, is better than any other night if you can have but part of the evening. Some will say that they cannot spend two nights a week, giving one to the prayer-meeting and one to the teachers' meeting. We have often heard this, and used to believe it, but our observation is

that in practice it is not so. If the two meetings are properly conducted, the one should make them hungry for the other.

Who should be in charge of the teachers' meeting?—The superintendent. It is his meeting. It does not follow that he should teach the lesson. That should be done by the person best adapted to do it, but the superintendent should be in general charge of the meeting. It is really his cabinet, his board of counselors, and he should be free to present at that time anything that needs to be considered relating to the welfare of the school. Indeed, he should have a carefully prepared program for each meeting, having previously decided upon what items should receive attention.

Who should attend the teachers' meeting?—Certainly the pastor, if he can possibly do so. He cannot come into such close touch with the forces that are to win members for the church at any other time or place as in the teachers' meeting. Certainly the superintendent and all his assistants and all of the officers of the Sunday-school ought to be there to know what is going on, and get help for their special work. Certainly all of the teachers. We say without hesitation that the teacher who *can* attend the teachers' meeting and *does not* do so is not showing the sort of interest that is necessary to succeed. We believe, however, that teachers will come if they are helped, unless providentially hindered. In addition to the above classes we would name two more. First, the supply teachers, *i. e.*, those who are to take the place of any teachers who may be absent, and also the prospective teachers, those who are looking forward to

occupying the teachers' office. They may at present be members of the normal class. This meeting will be a very great help to them.

**Fundamental features of the teachers' meeting.**—There are three: 1. Devotional exercises. 2. Instruction. 3. Business.

The devotional exercises should not be crowded into a corner. We should never be in too great a hurry to take time for prayer and song. There should be much prayer. Prayer not only for the school itself, but especially for the next Sunday's service. Prayer for the sick, for the dying, for the absent, for those who are spiritually interested, for the indifferent, etc.

Instruction should include not only the treatment of the lesson for the following Sunday, but any normal work that may be done and the discussion of practical methods of Sunday-school work.

Under the heading of business, everything should be included that has to do with the Sunday-school management, together with the hearing of reports of committees, etc.

The relation of these various items to each other will be best determined by local needs, but we should say on general principles that the discussion of the lesson for the following Sunday should take about half the time of the entire session. Divide the rest of the time pretty evenly between the devotional exercises and business. An hour and a quarter is quite short enough, and an hour and a half is much better for the whole meeting.

**Desirable equipment.**—A good blackboard is indispensable. If there is not a blackboard built into the wall, as

in a public-school building, we recommend the patent revolving board as the best. It is very light, convenient, and sightly. Lecturer's chalk is preferable to ordinary school crayon. Get two sizes. One has the sticks one inch square and three inches long, and comes in colors, six sticks in a box. The other is one-half inch square and three inches long, and comes twelve sticks in a box. Plain, simple lettering is always the best, and no stroke of the crayon should ever be made which is so light it cannot be well seen across the room.

There should be at least three maps, one of Palestine, one showing all of the Bible lands, and a third Paul's missionary journeys. Other maps may be useful, but these will answer. It is better to have maps which roll up out of the way. They last longer and stay cleaner. George F. Perry's chart, entitled "The Life of Christ," is also very desirable, and is likewise a relief map of Palestine. I would recommend also a teachers' library. A library of fifty choice books selected with a view of helping the teachers will do the Sunday-school more good than a scholars' library of several times that number of volumes. A list of "Fifty Best Books for Sunday-school Workers" will be furnished free by the writer upon application.

Who should teach the lesson?—If you have in your church one person who is especially adapted to do this particular work, whether it be pastor, superintendent, or teacher, that person may be placed in charge of the lesson period. There are advantages in this arrangement, chief among which is that one regular leader can plan his work in advance and maintain more continuity of study than

could be secured in any other way. In most churches the pastor is best adapted for this work. In many churches, however, there is no such person who can be depended upon, and some other plan must be devised. Sometimes it is well to select a few of the best teachers you have, and have them take turns in teaching the lesson. Another very helpful way, and one which can be used in any school, whether they have a good leader or not, is by the use of "angles," which will be referred to later.

Various methods of conducting the lesson period.—

1. Probably the most common one is that of having one teacher conduct the lesson study regularly. If this method is followed, the leader should not lecture to the teachers. Not one leader in a hundred can profitably lead a teachers' meeting indefinitely by the lecture method. The cemetery is full of teachers' meetings that have been talked to death, and their skeletons rise up out of their graves to haunt us. Other things being equal, that teachers' meeting is the most profitable which has the largest number of contributors, provided they are all under the direction of a wise leader.

2. Occasionally it is a good plan for the leader to pretend that the teachers are all primary scholars, or juniors, or intermediates, or young people, and teach accordingly. This custom is prevalent in primary unions, but it may be profitably used in regular teachers' meetings where teachers of all grades are found.

3. In some teachers' meetings the lesson is taught briefly twice and even three times by persons representing different departments in the school. For instance, the primary teacher would go hastily over the lesson,

bringing out those features which are most helpful to primary workers. Then a teacher of boys or girls would do the same thing, having in mind that department; then, perhaps, a third leader would treat the lesson from the standpoint of an adult class. This method is not generally satisfactory, but many like it.

4. One of the most helpful methods we have found is to assign a specific thought to each of a dozen teachers to prepare upon, each teacher presenting a different feature. This is commonly called the "angle" method. The writer and many others have found it most valuable, and it is rapidly growing in favor. It has two great advantages: first, a skilled leader is not necessary, though, of course, it is very desirable to have one. Almost anybody is willing to lead the teachers' meeting by this method; and then, in the second place, you are sure of at least a dozen people who will be ready to give thoughts upon the lesson from as many different "angles." The explanation of these "angles" is usually placed upon a little leaflet, all the "angles" being numbered. These leaflets are handed out several weeks in advance by the one who is to lead the teachers' meeting to those whom he desires to help him, assigning one "angle" to each person. By looking over the following list of "angles" the scheme will be very easily understood. It is made plain that all present are invited to ask questions or otherwise contribute to the meeting. The lesson leader is expected to be prepared on all the angles so as to take the place of any who may be absent, and supplement such answers as may not be sufficiently complete. Of course those holding the "angles" should

be careful not to cover more territory than that which is implied in their own "angle."

**Angle No. 1.—Approach.**

Give subject of last lesson, brief intervening history, time, place, and circumstances leading to this lesson.

**Angle No. 2.—The Lesson Story.**

Give the lesson story in your own words.

**Angle No. 3.—Analysis.**

Give a simple working outline for studying and teaching the lesson.

**Angle No. 4.—References.**

Give helpful references and parallel passages showing how they bear upon the lesson.

**Angle No. 5.—Biography.**

Give names of persons, classes, and nations mentioned or referred to.

**Angle No. 6.—Orientalisms.**

Give any Oriental customs or manners peculiar to this lesson.

**Angle No. 7.—Principle Teachings.**

Give the principle truths most forcibly taught.

**Angle No. 8.—First Step.**

Give a good way to introduce this lesson to your class so as to secure attention from the start.

**Angle No. 9.—Primary.**

Give the features of this lesson which are best adapted to small children.

**Angle No. 10.—Objects.**

Give names of any objects which might be profitably shown in teaching this lesson.

**Angle No. 11.—Illustrations.**

Give a few incidents or facts that will serve as illustrations.

**Angle No. 12.—Practical Lessons.**

Give the most practical lessons in personally applying the lesson to the every-day life of the scholars.

**Special features in the teachers' meeting.—Monotony** takes the edge off from anything, and the teachers' meeting is no exception. There should be as much variety in the program of the meeting as is consistent with its general plan and purpose. We will suggest a few things that have been tried with success.

1. A ten-minute normal drill, designed to aid the teachers along the line of pedagogy, Bible history, geography, etc.

2. Have a short paper, not over seven or eight minutes in length, on some practical theme of Sunday-school work, either general or local, the persons to take these parts being previously notified. Among the topics for consideration might be such as the following and others similar :

How may we double our membership?

How to get the most out of a lesson help.

Shall we try to have a library?

The social side of our school life.

My idea of a good teacher. (Told by several scholars.)

What about new song books?

How increase our missionary offering?

How shall we observe Christmas?

Our duty to absent and irregular scholars.

The value of class organization, etc.

Some meetings might be designated as "scholars' night," each teacher to bring one member of his class just to see what the teachers' meeting is.

3. In schools of considerable size it will be pleasant and profitable to put the devotional exercises of the meeting in charge of the officers of a given department of the school. For instance, suppose you have a cradle roll; let the superintendent of the Cradle Roll Department take charge of the devotional exercises at one meeting. This officer would open the meeting in the usual way, except that the hymns and prayers, and Scripture, also, if any, would be appropriate to the cradle roll work. Then a brief report of the department would be given, stating how many members they have, and how the teachers can help to carry forward the work of the department, reciting also any cases of special interest; this followed by a season of prayer for that department. In



the same way, only on another night, the Home Department could be considered; then the beginners, primaries, juniors, intermediates, young men, adults. Also such other activities as the Sunshine Band, the Messenger Boys, etc.

4. Devote ten minutes at each session to an "imaginary tour" through the countries spoken of in the lessons. Appoint in advance one person to read a paper each night, which purports to have been written from the place of the lesson for that evening, and at the very time the incident occurred. Take the first quarter of 1904 for instance. Our lessons are all about Christ, beginning with his boyhood. Suppose letters were written from such points as "Jerusalem," "Jordan's Banks," "Nazareth," "Capernaum," "Sea of Galilee," etc., following the course of lessons as closely as possible. One paper should begin where the other left off, and thus keep the imaginary party in constant company with those about whom they are studying. The thought is the same as that contained in the book entitled, "The Prince of the House of David," though, of course, on a very small scale. This plan has worked admirably with us on several occasions.

5. It is a good thing to have some special object for prayer each week during, say, a quarter. Suppose at one teachers' meeting the superintendent should make this announcement: "Our special prayer for the coming week and next teachers' meeting will be for the Young Men's Department," or, "For God's blessing upon our decision day," or, "That the Lord will send us more teachers," etc., etc. The good effect of this is that it gets all to thinking and praying about the same thing.

**Caution.**—*Do not try to have more than one of these special features in operation at once.*

**How to work up the attendance.**—First of all, the best attraction is to have a good, helpful, live teachers' meeting. However, even then all you want to reach will not come. Keep after them. Try to lay it upon the heart of each department superintendent to get all of his officers and teachers out to this meeting. We have often done this by putting figures on the board. For instance, calling the roll of the departments, the primary superintendent would say, "We have ten officers and teachers present, six absent." Enter this upon the board. Call the various departments in this way. When the figures are all before the teachers, they can see what department is showing up the best at the teachers' meeting.

Another good way is to encourage the teachers who are present and are interested to speak about it on the next Sunday to those teachers in the school who sit near them and did not attend, urging them to come to the teachers' meeting.

Always announce the teachers' meeting in the Sunday-school. Do not "hammer" the teachers for not coming, but announce the meeting in such a way that those who do not come will feel that they are missing something. Send personal letters to those who are absent, taking it for granted that all the officers and teachers will be there if they can. Even if you have the best teachers' meeting in the world, it will take special effort, and a great deal of it, to get some of your teachers there. However, keep at it.

**The quarterly teachers' meeting.**—If the teachers'

meeting is held every week, there is always one meeting in the quarter when there is no lesson to study. This is the meeting preceding the last Sunday of the quarter, which is review day. Do not, on any account, give up this meeting. It is the most important of all. It can be profitably used for several purposes. First, it gives an admirable opportunity to review the work of the past quarter and to plan for the new quarter. Also to look over the school in general and discover, if possible, where the weak places are, and try to strengthen them. At this meeting it is a good thing to have the roll-call of all officers and teachers, thus showing who are present and who are absent. There may be opportunity also for a brief talk from the pastor, or, possibly, from some one invited in from outside. It is well to have a special prayer service for the blessing of God upon your work. Meetings of this kind are just as valuable to the Sunday-school as the meetings of the bank directors are to a bank. Just in proportion as the work of the school is laid upon the hearts of those who are responsible for it, the school will prosper. It would not be out of place to have some refreshments on this night.

Finally.—Remember that everything that is really worth while costs much effort and persevering labor. Determine not only to *have* a teachers' meeting, but to have the *very best* teachers' meeting possible, and by God's blessing you will have it.

Plan your work ; then work your plan.

## CHAPTER VII

### GAINING AND RETAINING SCHOLARS

*By Rev. A. H. M'Kinney, Ph. D.*

Two very important questions are being asked and considered in many places and in various ways. They are: How shall we recruit our Bible School? How shall we retain those who join our school? Definite answers to these questions will depend in a large measure on the locality of a particular school, what was accomplished therein in the past, and what is being attempted just now. There are, however, some general principles that may be laid down for the guidance of workers in all places. From these principles, rules may be deduced to apply to particular localities and to especial needs.

Much depends on the local sentiment that has been developed concerning the Bible school. The creation of this sentiment does not depend upon any one class of workers, but upon the general attitude of Christians in a given locality in reference to the value and the work of the school. Pastor, church officers, Bible-school officers, teachers, and members, together with the parents and the friends of those who are, and those who ought to be, in the membership of the school, all have to do with the creation and the maintenance of this sentiment. The theological student, who, when a teacher in a Bible school, persistently prayed for the

little boys and girls present, helped to create a sentiment that finds expression in young people leaving the Bible school, because it is by them regarded as a place for little boys and girls. My good friend, the zealous superintendent, who, the other Sunday just before the prayer, said, "I want every little child here to bow his head," is unconsciously, but nevertheless very really, helping to emphasize the sentiment that the Bible school is for little children only.

Those well-meaning but very foolish persons who always talk about the Bible school as being the nursery of the church help to develop a sentiment which takes boys and girls out of the school, because of their thinking that a nursery is a place for babies. Contrariwise, those who pray for, and talk about, the young men and the young women of the Bible school, who frequently speak of the men and women of our school, do much to arouse a sentiment which results in bringing youths and adults into the school and in keeping them there. He who talks about the Bible school as the gymnasium of the church helps to create the sentiment that it is the place in which growing Christians may get strong and in which developed children of God may exercise the highest powers bestowed upon them by their heavenly Father.

Sympathetic and continuous coöperation among those connected with the various departments of the church work renders possible the kind of sentiment advocated in the foregoing. The time has long since passed when intelligent, active Christians talked about the church and the Sunday-school as if they were two. In these

days the wise pastor and his alert co-workers recognize that the Bible school is a part of the church, and always speak of it as such. The Bible school is the church studying the Word of God. There is no divorcing of the school from the church any more than there is a separation of the communion service from the preaching service.

Next to the pastor and the church officials the most helpful coöperators in this field are those earnest Christian parents who are seeking the highest good for their children. They recognize the value of the work and the influence of the Bible school and are desirous that their offspring should derive the greatest possible benefit therefrom. Hence, they coöperate to the limit of their ability in the endeavor to make and to keep the school what it should be, and by example and precept they strive to have the young people think highly of the school.

There is an anecdote current in the central part of the Empire State to the effect that in the home of a certain clergyman there were seven children. In due time the four sons became clergymen, and the three daughters married clergymen. When father or mother was asked how such a phenomenal state of affairs had been brought about, the reply would be somewhat as follows: "In our home we always made it our practice in the presence of our children to speak of the church as the grandest institution on earth, and of the ministry as the noblest calling in the world. When we had anything in the way of adverse criticism of the church or of any one connected therewith, or when we had some-

thing discouraging to talk about, we kept it for the privacy of our own room and for a time when our children would not hear it." Wise father and mother! The moral?

The cradle roll is an important aid in enlisting recruits for the Bible school. We are wiser in some respects, at least, in these days than were those who went before us. In no way is this wisdom more marked than in the carrying out of the plan to enroll the little ones of our congregation as members of the Bible school, if not as soon as they are born, at least as soon as they are named. The school that does not number a cradle roll among its agencies for good is overlooking one of the simplest, easiest, and most effective methods for recruiting the membership thereof. It needs no prophet to foretell the fact that the mother, when the proper time comes, will send her little one to the Bible school of which it is already an enrolled member through the Cradle Roll Department.

The Home Department is at the other extreme of the Bible-school effort, and yet it is so closely related to the cradle roll that in reference to many homes it is almost impossible to think of the one without having the other one come to mind. The mother who is a member of the Home Department is most likely to have her child's name on the cradle roll, and, on the other hand, where the infant is first enrolled as a member of the school, it is very likely to follow that the mother also becomes a member through the Home Department. A well-conducted Home Department is a feeder for all the other departments of the school from the primary up.

Every school should have a corps of missionaries.—What! paid missionaries? No; volunteer missionaries. Impossible! No, indeed; quite the contrary. By the exercise of a little ingenuity a number of active volunteers may be secured. How? By enlisting the boys and the girls of the school to act as missionaries. Many superintendents have not yet learned the fact that the very best missionary to boys of ten is a boy of ten, that girls of twelve can bring into the school more girls of twelve than can any one else. Get your boys and girls to promise that they will be missionaries, instruct them how to proceed, and when they have brought in new pupils give them credit for what they have done. This credit should not be in the shape of a reward with monetary value, but should be a public recognition carrying with it some honor. Just how the volunteers are to work will depend on the locality. For example: A girl brought into a large city school a number of pupils. Upon being questioned as to her methods she said: "I watch the vans." Her plan was to watch the furniture vans to learn when a new family migrated into the neighborhood. Ascertaining the house into which the newcomers moved, if there were children among them, she became acquainted with them, invited them to visit her Sunday-school, and, if allowed to do so, called for them and took them with her to Sunday-school. This plan, of course, would not be very fruitful in results in country districts, but it is suggestive of what may be done. If the boys and the girls are brought together and allowed to discuss the matter informally, they will suggest methods that will surprise the older folks, but



that, nevertheless, will bring pupils into the school. The one great evil to be guarded against is that of yielding to the temptation to entice pupils away from other schools. The following principles should be adopted, distinctly understood, and lived up to:—

1. No members of neighboring schools will be accepted as members of this school.

2. No former members of neighboring schools will be enrolled until they have shown good reasons for leaving those schools.

Getting pupils into a school in most localities is nothing like as difficult as holding them in the school. The mistake has been, perhaps, that too much thought has been given to the getting and too little to the holding. The average Bible school has been compared to the river Nile, which is full to overflowing at times. Many schools are full about Christmas time or just before some especial occasion. At other times they are at a very low ebb.

The following will have much to do with the condition of the school.

Admission should not be made too easy.—The cheaper a thing is, the less the regard which the ordinary person has for it. Conversely, that which is difficult of acquirement is desired by most persons. The Bible school that admits everybody indiscriminately does not occupy a high place in the thought of the community. If a Bible school would rise to a plane from which it could announce, *We purpose to admit only those who will promise to help make this the very best possible school*, people would be eager to join.

Persons who have left other schools for some fancied

slight or for some trivial reason would not be admitted into such a school, and those who unite with the school about a month before Christmas and disappear a month afterward could not become members of such a school, for the simple reason that only in extraordinary cases would admissions be made between November 15th and January 1st.

**Atmosphere helps greatly.**—What is atmosphere? Who can define it? Everybody knows what it is however. A stranger visits a school and at once feels that it is a good place in which to be, and he desires to come again. Just what it is that attracts and holds him he cannot say. It is the atmosphere of the school. The next Sunday he visits another school. At once he is repelled, and it would be almost impossible to get him to return. Again it is the atmosphere. Some of the elements of a good atmospheric condition in a Bible school are :—

ACTIVITY,  
REVERENCE,  
SPIRITUALITY,  
RESPONSIVENESS,  
CORDIALITY.

If first of all the superintendent exhibits these qualities, and in the second place the officers manifest them, the teachers will likewise strive for them, and the majority of the pupils will follow suit. Then the school has an atmosphere that people like, and it holds those who come to it. Of course, there must be much prayer, unremitting labor, and eternal vigilance on the part of the leaders to maintain such an atmosphere. But, oh, how

it pays. After Will had been a member of a certain Bible school for four years, had accepted Christ as his Saviour, and had united with the church, I said to him: "What first brought you to our school?" "Well, it was this way. I used to play with Fred. On Sunday afternoons he always stopped the game to go to Sunday-school, so I said: 'If you are going to do that, I might as well go with you and see what your school is like.' I came one Sunday and I liked the school so much that I have attended it ever since." It was the atmosphere that affected the visitor.

A well-arranged order of service, varied from Sunday to Sunday and carried out without breaks, will do much to hold pupils, especially the elder ones. Of course, the program is but the reflection of the man behind it. The one who declares that the Holy Spirit runs his school, and is too lazy to make adequate preparation for his opening and closing devotional services, deceives no one. The boy who demanded of a minister, "Would you go to a Sunday-school where the superintendent read the First Psalm for seven Sundays in succession?" was not fooled, and put a question very difficult to answer. He who really seeks the help of the Holy Spirit will make the best possible preparation for his platform work, and then he can pray sincerely for a blessing upon it. His good work will do much to hold all, but especially the older pupils in the school.

Grading is a great help in holding pupils. The number of schools that recognize the value and are reaping the benefits of grading is rapidly increasing. There are still some timid officers who are afraid that the numbers

in their schools will be reduced if they attempt to grade. There will be, perhaps, some opposition at first, but soon the value of grading will be recognized, and only those who are so selfish that they have no regard for the welfare of the school will ask to go back to the antiquated, ungraded system. More large boys and girls than most persons know leave the Bible school because it is not graded properly. Many of these may be retained when grading is adapted as the proper thing.

Rewards may be made a helpful factor in the solution of many problems connected with the Bible school. The distinction between prizes and rewards is now quite generally recognized. A prize which can be obtained by one individual, or at best by a very few, does more harm than good. On the other hand, a reward which may be won by all those who fulfil certain specified conditions cannot be too highly commended. In very many places thoughtful workers are applauding the following sentiment: *We should scold evil-doers less, and commend more those who do well.* This commendation is frequently accompanied with a reward. What this reward should be must be determined by local conditions. It is generally best to have it in the form of a public honor or a public recognition of some kind. There is a sense of justice in young people to which this kind of reward strongly appeals. Let us hope, pray, and work for the coming of that time when the pupil who has been present during the year at one-eighth or one-quarter of the sessions of the Bible school will not receive from the school the same gift at Christmas as does the one who has attended three-quarters or seven-eighths of the sessions.

Then will be put upon faithfulness a premium which will result in a larger registry and a higher yearly percentage of attendance.

The exhortation to teachers to visit their pupils has been passed along so frequently that it has become threadbare. Nevertheless, there is nothing that cements the tie that binds young and old to their classes and to the school that quite equals the visits paid by teachers and officers. There are some exceptional cases where regular visitation is not possible, and others where it is not advisable, but when this has been admitted, it is true that very many officers and teachers do not visit as they might. Many cases have recently come under the writer's observation, where extra efforts put forth in this line have resulted in unhopd-for benefits to the school, not merely in obtaining new members therefor, but also in retaining in the school those who were about to drop out, and in stimulating those who were becoming careless. Teacher, visit your pupils. If you cannot visit, write to them. Superintendent, do the same to your fellow-workers, and note the result.

**Teachers' meeting.**—Somewhere and somehow, once a week if possible, under no circumstances less than once a month, there should be held a teachers' meeting. Where the weekly teachers' meeting is held, a threefold reason for its existence should ever be kept in view and lived up to in actual practice:—

1. It should bind the workers together in a spiritual atmosphere.
2. It should result in better teaching on the Sabbath.
3. It should give to the school those plans and

methods which make possible all of the foregoing suggestions.

In the practical carrying out of these plans it is taken for granted that officers and teachers are praying men and women who study their Bibles and who look for inspiration and power from him who wants to be the leader in their great work, even to the Holy Spirit himself.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PRINTER'S INK

In many large Sunday-schools the superintendent uses the printing-press to very good advantage. As he cannot possibly reach the teachers, officers, and scholars personally, or by pen, he sends them messages through the mail, but in printed form. That this is effective, no one will deny, for all love to know that they are remembered.

Lately we visited the famous school of the Bushwick Avenue Central Methodist Episcopal Church, Brooklyn. The school numbers well over two thousand members, and the amount of printing that they do is very great.

Now, having gone as far as this, it occurs to us that many teachers and superintendents will at once say, "We cannot afford to pay for printer's ink." Well, I am not sure of that. But if you cannot, you can get some form of multiplier, of which there are many on the market, and do your own multiplying of letters or forms, and in this way do your school much good. And if your class is a small one, numbering say only ten members, you can use pen and ink to good advantage. If you do not believe this, all that you have to do is to try it, and you will be convinced of the truth of what we say.

Of course it is not possible, on account of lack of space, for us to give anything like all of the printed forms that this school uses. But we will give some of them as

specimens, so that others may see what one grand school does in this line. Here, for example, is an invitation for Rally Day.

**HUSHWICK AVENUE CENTRAL METHODIST EPISCOPAL  
SUNDAY-SCHOOL, BROOKLYN, N. Y.**

**RALLY DAY, SEPT. 30, 1906.**

*Dear Friend:* How glad we shall be, after the separations of the summer, to get our big Sunday-school family together on Sunday, September 30th, for our Rally Day services. Many have a fine record for faithful summer attendance upon Sunday-school while at home and away, and do not need to be rallied in that respect. But Rally Day gives us all an opportunity to greet each other, to have our hearts cheered by an inspiring service, and to move forward with one accord in our important Sunday-school work.

A program has been prepared worth coming to hear. The decorations will be attractive. There will be a roll call of the classes. We trust your class will get the recognition for "every member present." Don't disappoint your teacher and class and superintendent by being absent.

Let us make this the greatest Rally Day session our school has ever had; the bugle note for better attendance, better lesson study, better interest than ever before. To accomplish this, we must have your help and presence.

I hope you will endeavor to be on hand ten minutes before 2:30 to greet your teacher, superintendent, and friends. And I should be greatly pleased if we could have this prompt attendance every Sunday.

Very cordially,

**FRANK L. BROWN,**  
*Superintendent of Sunday-school.*

**P. S.**—Will you not evidence your interest in the school by a hearty invitation to at least one neighbor or friend to join our school on Rally Day, if not attending



elsewhere? Secure, if possible, a member for the Cradle Roll or Home Department, and hand names, with birthday, to the Secretary or Superintendent.

This school makes much of its Home Department, and to members of this department it sends the following greeting on their birthdays.

**Bushwick Avenue-Central  
Methodist Episcopal Sunday-school**

FRANK L. BROWN, Supt., 1110 Bushwick Ave.

**HOME DEPARTMENT**

RICHARD W. WEST, Supt., 629 Decatur St.

**Brooklyn, N. Y., ..... 190**

*Dear Friend:* It is our glad privilege to congratulate you as a member of our Home Department, on a new Birthday Anniversary.

This day is a silent reminder that you are a year's march nearer the eternal home. And what is it that makes home the dear spot it is? It is not the building, not the adornments of the rooms, but the persons that make home. The precious things of life and memory are associated with the personality of our dear ones; their unselfishness and patience and unfailing love. It is these things that linger like a sweet atmosphere about our after years as we think of home, and we

Long for the touch of a vanished hand,  
For the sound of a voice that is still.

And the charm and the joy of that home country toward which we are traveling is that some one is there whom we know and love—one who has loved us and given himself for us, and won our heart and our life's best service. It is Christ that makes heaven. Do we really know him and love him? If we do he will prepare the home for us, and will prepare us for the home by life's daily discipline;

loosening our grip little by little upon the things we hold here so tightly.

Nearer my Father's house  
Where the many mansions be,  
Nearer the great white throne,  
Nearer the crystal sea.

Nearer the bounds of life  
Where we lay our burden down,  
Nearer leaving the cross,  
Nearer gaining the crown.

We hope you have been helped during the year by your Bible Home Readings and by the study of the precious Guide Book to our Home, and by the fellowship of our Home Department.

Cordially yours,

Of course so large a school has a large corps of teachers, and new ones come to the school constantly to take the places of those who have to withdraw. To each new teacher the following is sent.

**Bushwick Ave. M. E.**  
**SUNDAY-SCHOOL.**

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Feb. 2, 1906.

*Dear Friend:* We are very glad to welcome you as a member of our Teachers' Board, and wish that you would at once feel that you are a vital part of our great school work, and that the Master calls upon you to do your best for him in this field. We stand ready to coöperate with you in the fullest possible way to make your class or other work a success.

Will you permit the following suggestions?

Attendance is urged upon the monthly business meetings the second Thursday of each month, and the meetings for lesson study as announced.

Be at school BEFORE 2:30 to greet your class, and thus assist in making the opening prompt, reverential, and orderly.

See that your scholars join heartily in the singing and reading of Scriptures, and that they reverently bow their

heads and avoid all talking during prayer. Scholars are not permitted to leave before close of session without permission of one of the associate superintendents.

Visit the homes of your new scholars promptly, and all your class as often as you can conveniently do so. The knowledge and sympathy thus gained will give wings to your work.

Inspire your class to try for the school rewards for attendance and Memory Verse, Lesson Examinations, and Daily Home Reading of Bible, and strive with prayer and tact and love to win them to a choice of Jesus Christ.

We pray that you will be greatly blessed in your work, and that for many years you will be here to labor with and for the Master.

Fraternally yours,

F. L. BROWN,  
*Superintendent.*

The question of substitute teachers is solved in this school in the following way. Who does not see that this is common sense applied to Sunday-school management?

**Bushwick Avenue-Central  
Methodist Episcopal Sunday-School**

FRANK L. BROWN, Supt., 1110 Bushwick Ave.  
HENRY SCRIVENS, Sec., 1026 Madison St.  
CHARLES I. CLARK, Treas., 1201 Jefferson Ave.

**Brooklyn, N. Y., ..... 190**

*Dear Friend:* In our large school there are of necessity every Sunday some of our teachers absent.

To provide for these vacancies we have a substitute teacher's list of friends who will be willing to take a class not oftener than once a month, if notified during the week before the Sunday. It is needless to say that by serving in this way you will be doing the school and the Master a great service which will also, we believe, be a blessing to you.

I have placed your name on the list, confident that you will be glad to coöperate unless hindered by sickness or other good reason.

If you have any preference as to department, whether Junior, Intermediate, or Senior, kindly let me know. With full appreciation of this service,

Cordially yours,

In order to carry out this plan of substitutes the following card is mailed to such teachers as they need, so that they may be prepared to act promptly on the following Sunday.

**Busbwick Avenue M. E. Sunday-School**

*Brooklyn,.....190*

*Dear Friend :*

*Will you kindly report for substitute service in the.....department next Sunday.....inst., at at 2 : 20 P. M. to M.....*

*and greatly oblige,*

*Cordially yours, FRANK L. BROWN, Supt.*

Attendance at the meeting for lesson study on Saturday evening at 8 o'clock in the inner room may be of help to you in the preparation of the lesson for Sunday.

In this school careful work is done in the matter of visitors. Lately I was there as a visitor. The following Saturday I received by mail the card, a copy of which is subjoined. Do you not suppose that if I had

264 SPARKS FROM A SUPERINTENDENT'S ANVIL

been looking for a Sunday-school home, and had received such a kindly card, I would have been likely to return to that school the following week?

Form 8. 7-19-'06—500.

**Bushwick Avenue-Central Methodist Episcopal  
Sunday-School  
CORNER MADISON STREET**

BROOKLYN, N. Y., ..... 190

*Dear Friend:* We were very glad to see you among our visitors on Sunday last, and trust you found something of interest and profit in our school work.

Should you not be connected with any other Sabbath-school, we would be pleased to have you become one of us, either in connection with our regular Sunday session or our Home Department.

We shall be happy to greet you at any time. Very cordially,

.....  
*For Ushers' Committee.*

.....  
*Superintendent.*

No detail seems to escape the watchful eye of the superintendent. Here for example is a copy of a letter sent to each member of the Cradle Roll. Of course the child cannot read it, but the mother can. It will make a deep impression on her heart, and rain or shine she will be there with her baby. Would not this be the case with you? Then why not with others?

**Bushwick Avenue-Central  
Methodist Episcopal Sunday-School**

**Brooklyn, N. Y., Sept. 10, 1906.**

**RALLY DAY, Sept. 30, 1906.**

*Dear Little Cradle Roll Friend:* You are so little you may not know what a Sunday-school Rally Day is, but your mamma and papa will know, I am sure.

We want everybody, big and little, at Sunday-school, Sunday, September 30th, at 2:30 P. M. That means you. Ask papa and mamma to bring you to the kindergarten room, on Madison Street, for we shall have a march around the room of all the members of the Cradle Roll and their mammas and a real good time. We shall also have a pretty souvenir for you.

In the senior department on Rally Day the pastor will baptize any Cradle Roll babies whose parents may desire to bring them for that purpose.

Lovingly yours,

FRANK L. BROWN,

*Superintendent of Sunday-school.*

MRS. M. A. HUTCHINSON,

*Superintendent of Cradle Roll.*

Perhaps your mamma can bring to Mrs. Hutchinson the name and birthday of some other baby on Rally Day as a new member for our Cradle Roll.

In this school they have a regularly organized Messenger Service, by means of which they can send special messages to members of the school. The following blank is one used for this purpose :

Form 1 **MESSENGER CADET SERVICE**

OF THE

**Busbwick Avenue-Central M. E. Sunday-School**

**BROOKLYN, N. Y.**

**DEAR FRIEND :**

*THIS MESSAGE is handed to you by one of our Messengers to let you know of our regret at your absence from the Sunday-school, and to express the hope that you are not sick. "Every member present every Sunday" is our aim.*

*Please let us know on the accompanying blank the cause of your absence.*

*We trust you can be with us next Sunday.*

*Sincerely your superintendent,*

FRANK L. BROWN.

NAME.....

I will be present next Sunday if possible.

The cause of my absence was.....

**TO THE SUPERINTENDENT**

## 266 SPARKS FROM A SUPERINTENDENT'S ANVIL

If the messenger does not find the person at home, he leaves the following message :

Form a	<b>MESSENGER CADET SERVICE SLIP</b>
Dear Friend :	
As a Messenger Cadet, I called at your house to-day with a message, which I leave, as I am unable to see you. Will you kindly fill out the blanks as requested and mail to our superintendent, using the addressed envelope, or, if you prefer me to call again for it, please let me know and oblige,	
Yours for the Sunday-school	
.....Messenger Cadet	
No.....	Street.

Finally (so far as this article is concerned, but not so far as their work with printer's ink is concerned), they try to keep track of all their absentees by means of visitation, through the use of the following card, which is sent to the teachers :

If unable to report promptly, kindly return card to Secretary at once, that inquiry may be made through Messenger Cadet Corps.	<b>Bushwick Avenue-Central M. E. Sunday-School</b>	
	..... <b>DEPARTMENT</b>	
	Class No.....	.....Teacher
	.....	
	.....	
Dear Friend : I notice the absence for ..... successive Sundays of the scholar mentioned above. Please ascertain by personal visitation, if possible, or by letter, the reason.		
Note same on back of this card and return to me at your earliest convenience. Truly yours,		
F. L. BROWN, <i>Superintendent.</i>		

## CHAPTER IX

### THE HOME DEPARTMENT

*By Mrs. J. E. Simmons, Superintendent of Home Department in  
New York State*

"The time has now arrived when we must start a Home Department in our Sunday-school. What are the first steps to be taken?"

1. Ask your pastor to preach a sermon on the importance of Bible study some Sunday morning, and have ready cards to be signed and dropped into the collection plates by those who will agree to take up the study of the regular lesson at the beginning of the next quarter.

2. Send cards home by the Sunday-school scholars to be signed by the parents and returned the following Sunday. A card called "A Message from the Sunday-school" has been prepared for this purpose. It reads:

*Dear Parent* :—We are very glad to have your child in our Sunday-school, and we should be pleased to have *you* also connected with the school. If it is not feasible for you to attend its sessions, let us enroll you as a member of our Home Department. You will then be kept in touch with the school by the Visitor, who will bring you the lesson helps once in three months, and you will feel yourself one of the vast host engaged in the study of the same Scripture passage. Will you join? If so, write



your name and address on the blank space below,  
and return this card by your child to  
**THE SUPERINTENDENT.**

Name.....

Address .....

You are at liberty to have cards like this printed if you desire to use them for your own school.

3. Your pastor always keeps a correct list of all members of the church and congregation. Ask him to allow you to draw off the names of all those who are not members of the Sunday-school. Divide this list into groups, according to location, and send a wise visitor to call on each group. Explain the plan of home Bible study. In speaking to church-members emphasize the importance of having every member of the church enrolled as a member of the Bible school, either in the main school or in the Home Department.

4. Having secured a list of names from the cards returned and from the visits made, it now becomes necessary to elect or appoint a Home Department superintendent and visitors to carry on the work. There are in all churches men and women who often ask themselves, "What can I do for the Master?" Seek out such a consecrated servant.

The Home Department superintendent needs to be a man or woman who is willing to do some writing and to plan work to be done by others. A mistaken idea sometimes causes a refusal to accept this office. The duty of the superintendent is to superintend the work, not to do

all the work unaided. With this thought in mind select your superintendent, and, in consultation with the pastor, Sunday-school superintendent, and Home Department superintendent, select the visitors.

It is not required that a visitor should teach the lesson or offer a prayer in every house visited. Occasions may arise when such service can be rendered most opportunely, but usually the *Quarterly* is delivered, the report of study secured, and a friendly call made once each quarter.

If those whom you desire to have do this work seem reluctant to attempt it, invite them to meet in an informal way, and talk over the opportunities afforded by the Home Department work of reaching those who are not now in close touch with the school. Impress upon the workers you desire to secure the thought that in this way they may render a real service to the Master's kingdom, and improve their own spiritual prospects. Pray together, asking for guidance. One has said, "The face and voice pregnant with fervent communication with the Father must achieve success, and turn hesitation into a willing decision of acceptance."

5. An excellent plan is to hold an *Installation Service* at the close of the Sunday morning sermon. The newly appointed workers step forward, and the pastor, thanking them for their promised help in his work, gives them the hand of fellowship in this new line of service, the Sunday-school superintendent gives them the hand of fellowship in behalf of the school, and the congregation rises and stands with the workers, while the pastor offers a prayer of consecration. Such a service will surely make

the Home Department superintendent and visitors feel that the church and school appreciate fully the dignity and responsibility of their work. If it is not possible to arrange for the installation of the workers, do not allow that to delay the work.

6. The list of names of those who are promised as home Bible students should now be *divided into classes*, putting into one class about ten or twelve persons who live in the same vicinity. Put time and thought upon the apportionment of the classes. Endeavor to adjust the class and the visitor to each other, in order that the work may be done easily, agreeably, and efficiently. It is better, when feasible, to give a visitor those whom she is not accustomed to visit frequently in a neighborly way, as the call will be less likely to degenerate into a mere gossipy chat.

The superintendent should keep a careful record of every class, and for that purpose she should provide herself with a "Home Department Superintendent's Record Book." She should also give each visitor a "Visitor's Class Record," in which to keep a careful report of visits made, lessons studied by each student, and collections received. These form the basis of the report to be given before the school each quarter. The Home Department superintendent should recognize the importance of keeping her records correctly, because if she fails to do so she breaks the statistical chain which extends from her department to the County, State, and International Sunday-school Association.

A cheerful, courageous Home Department superintendent will greatly help the visitors. She should call a

meeting of the visitors quarterly, if possible, for mutual encouragement and to listen to the reports of work done during the past quarter. Let the superintendent constantly hold before the visitors a high spiritual ideal, and help them to feel that here is a very real opportunity to do some lasting work for God.

The visitor should not only carry the helps regularly each quarter *before* the first Sunday and bring back to the superintendent the report envelope and offering, but should also become the friend of every member of her class. Upon the sympathetic touch of the visitor depends the success of the department. She should keep a note-book in which to jot down any items of interest, such as illness, especial need of a call from the pastor, possible Sunday-school scholars or Cradle Roll members, and any expression of interest in the lesson study. From these items she will be able to make an interesting quarterly report.

**Objections answered.**—The objection is sometimes raised against the Home Department that many of those who join it ought to be in the main school. If we grant that they should be in the main school, it still remains true that comparatively few of them could possibly be induced to attend its sessions, for many people are not ready to do what they ought. Is it not better that they should study God's Word in the home than not at all? It was stated at the Toronto Convention that ninety-five per cent. of the church-members do not study the Bible. It is hopeless to expect that even one-half of that number will ever be induced to join the Sunday-school, but many of them will join the Home Department if wisely approached.

It is sometimes objected that it costs so much to run the main school there is no money to buy Home Department supplies.

Almost without exception the department soon becomes self-sustaining, and in many cases puts money into the treasury of the school. It is also often a contributor to the benevolent causes of the church with which it is connected. The objection of cost is, therefore, not a valid one, but the first two quarters' supplies must be paid for by the school, because the visitors do not bring back the first quarter's collection envelopes until after they have delivered the second set of helps. This, then, is the trying time. If you will have patience to carry the department through the first six months of its existence, you will have no further trouble with its finances.

The question is often asked, "Does not the Home Department decrease the membership of the main school?" A sufficient answer to that question is, "No, for if our experience proved that it did we should soon cease to work the Home Department." Every year some people are forced by circumstances to sever their connection with the Sunday-school, either for a time or permanently. They would stay out just the same if there were no Home Department, and so be lost to the school entirely; but through it they are still kept in touch and sympathy with the school, and they are more likely to return to it when they are again free to do so because of having this tie.

Not only does the Home Department not decrease the membership of the main school, but it builds it up in two ways. A good percentage of the Home Department

scholars finally join the school, but that is not the only advantage gained. It frequently happens that the visitors in making their rounds find children or even older people who can at once be induced to enter the school. The visitors are also able to secure many names for the Cradle Roll, and a baby's name is often the strongest and sometimes the only tie between the parents and the church.

**To insure success.**—In order to make the department as useful and successful as it is possible for it to become, there should be unanimity of purpose and action on the part of all concerned. The pastor may help by speaking of its work from the pulpit and by encouraging the workers in private, and he may sometimes find a new student when making his pastoral calls. The Sunday-school superintendent may add his influence, especially by calling for frequent reports before the main school. The church-members may help by securing scholars and by praying for the success of the workers. The Home Department students may help by faithful study, a careful report, and a regular offering, also by calling the attention of a friend to this plan of home Bible study.

Attention to the following little details will cause the work of the Home Department superintendent to move smoothly.

The report and collection envelope should be gummed to the inside of the cover of the *Quarterly*; otherwise it is usually lost before the end of the quarter.

All the helps to be carried by one visitor should be made into a package, marked with her name, and given

to her at least a week in advance. In a small department these packages may be delivered to the visitors at church, but in case of a large department it may be necessary to send some of them by a messenger.

If a visitor reports the removal of one of her class to some other portion of the city, the name should be transferred to the class of the visitor for that vicinity and the student notified of the change of visitors. If a member removes from the city, transfer the name to the correspondence class.

When a department becomes very large the superintendent will find it necessary to have a secretary, who should work under her direction, in order that no confusion may arise in keeping the records.





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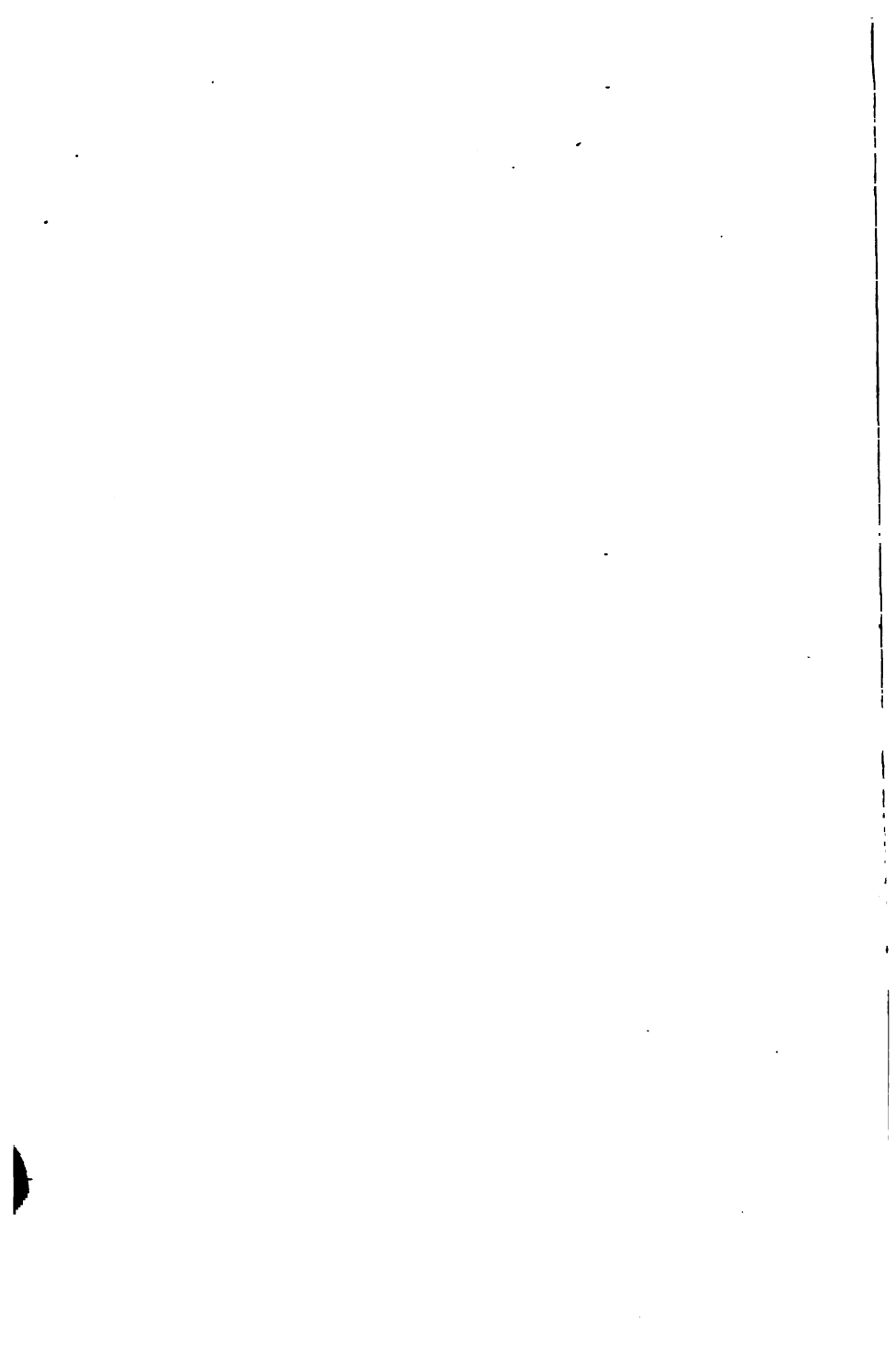
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